

THE NORTHERN WORLD    BRILL

Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth-Century Europe



Edited by Douglas L. Biggs,
Sharon D. Michalove and
A. Compton Reeves



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REPUTATION AND REPRESENTATION
IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE

THE NORTHERN WORLD

North Europe and the Baltic c. 400-1700 AD
Peoples, Economies and Cultures

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VOLUME 8



REPUTATION AND REPRESENTATION IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE

EDITED BY

DOUGLAS L. BIGGS,
SHARON D. MICHALOVE,
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INTRODUCTION

This volume is made up of selected papers from the third conference on fifteenth-century studies sponsored by the North American Branch of the Richard III Society, held in late April 2001. Like its two predecessors of 1995 and 1998, the conference was held immediately prior to the International Congress on Medieval Studies which meets each year at Western Michigan University, and that made it possible to bring together both junior and senior scholars from Europe and North America who would then make their way to the International Congress. Papers from the first two conferences were published as *Estrangement, Enterprise and Education in Fifteenth-Century England* (1998) and *Traditions and Transformations in Late Medieval England* (2002). The third conference was held at Allerton Park, the conference center of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which provided a rural, residential, and congenial country-estate venue for the conference. All of the participants in the conference and the non-academic members of the Richard III Society (American Branch) who were present benefited from the setting and the stimulating discussions that surrounded the more formal presentation of papers. The working conference format was designed and arranged under the leadership of Sharon D. Michalove of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who was not only the scholar-on-the-scene to prepare for the conference, but also was holding office as Chairman of the American Branch of the Richard III Society. The keynote address to the conference was delivered by Professor Richard H. Helmholz of the University of Chicago.

The title of this volume emerged spontaneously in the course of the conference as the themes of reputation and representation repeatedly appeared. We heard about the importance of reputation for respectable women, the boundaries of reputation for the actions of leaders as they acted on the political stage, and the historical reputations of fifteenth-century individuals. We also engaged in the evaluation of the degree to which certain individuals represented their political or status group in society, and how, for instance, the leadership of Bristol tried to represent itself in a favorable historical light. In other ways as well, the papers addressed matters of reputation and

representation. It need not be belabored here, for readers of the essays printed here will find the undercurrent themes of reputation and representation coming readily to mind.

The thirteen papers in this volume cover the ‘long’ fifteenth century, from the reign of the first Lancastrian king, Henry IV, to the reign of the first Tudor king, Henry VII. In “The ‘Lancastrianization’ of the North” Mark Arvanigian addresses the establishment of Henry IV’s authority in the immediate aftermath of his ousting of his cousin Richard II from the kingship of England. Arvanigian takes the position that regional powerbrokers were not solidly behind the usurpation of 1399, and that Henry IV had to develop support in the North for his kingship. Arvanigian argues that Henry IV formulated a regional policy for the North that was carefully planned and in large measure successful. Henry nurtured a network of powerful supporters in the locality, such as Ralph Neville, earl of Westmorland, and the talented lawyer William Gascoigne, and paid attention to their interests while they safeguarded the interests of the king. Henry recognized that the Scottish March was too remote from Westminster to be defended and governed directly, and that reliance upon local powers was a necessary as well as a realistic policy. The king’s policy, however, ran counter to the interests of the Percy family, which was opposed to sharing their regional dominance, and Arvanigian suggests that Henry’s policy in the North is a large part of the explanation for the Percy rebellions of 1403 and 1405.

A contemporary of Henry IV was John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, and Kelly DeVries finds it curious that Duke John is not thought of as a general, while Henry IV’s son, Henry V, is high on the list of medieval military commanders. DeVries sets out to redress the lack of attention given by historians to the abilities of the Valois dukes of Burgundy as military commanders in the expansion of their duchy, focusing upon the efforts of the second duke, John the Fearless. As a young man, John was one of the junior commanders defeated by the Ottoman Turks at Nicopolis (1396), and that was his one significant military humiliation. When John of Bavaria, prince-bishop of Liège, called upon his brother-in-law, John the Fearless, in 1407 for aid in putting down a rebellion, Duke John responded with a successful intervention that would in time bring the prince-bishopric under Burgundian control. Duke John’s first success was to force the lifting of the Liègeois siege of Maastricht. That siege had been conducted with the extensive use of gunpowder artillery, but it was with

infantry and cavalry that Duke John achieved a victory over his opponents at Othee (1408). DeVries is very complimentary of the generalship of John the Fearless at Othee. Duke John's army successfully employed gunpowder artillery in its strategy to capture the rebellious fortress of Vellexon in 1410. The duke's military reputation following the defeat of the Liègeois and the capture of Vellexon was a clear asset as he engaged his Armagnac opponents in the civil war in France to secure control over the government of Charles VI. DeVries narrates the generalship of John the Fearless in the civil war to the duke's ultimate occupation of Paris in 1418, and concludes that the duke was an effective general, though not brilliant, who learned to use to good end the military resources available to him.

Burgundy was also part of the story in Sharon Michalove's "Women as Book Collectors and Disseminators of Culture in Late Medieval England and Burgundy." Michalove uses a number of women as representatives of a category of women: Margaret of Anjou, Margaret of York, several Bohun women, Blanche of Lancaster, Joan Beaufort, and women of the Neville family. Noting the importance of female patronage for vernacular works of literature, Michalove gives her emphasis to the activities of Margaret of Anjou, who came from French-speaking culture to England, and to Margaret of York, sister of the English kings Edward IV and Richard III, who became the wife of Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy. Another aspect of the life of Margaret of York is addressed by Harry Schnitker in "Margaret of York on Pilgrimage." Michalove looks at the cultural and intellectual life of Margaret, while Schnitker directs us to the cultural and spiritual side of Margaret's life, and approaches Margaret's pilgrimage activity as an exemplification of her religious sentiments. And Margaret was indeed an energetic pilgrim. For example, Margaret was a committed venerator of the Virgin Mary, and a favorite pilgrimage destination was to the statue of Our Lady at Halle in Hainault. This Black Madonna and other were visited by Margaret at least in part perhaps because of their being invoked by women facing concerns about marriage, conception, childbirth, children, and death. Margaret's marriage, it may be remembered, was childless, but she was the foster mother to the heiress of Burgundy. Many, but not all, of Margaret's pilgrimages had a Marian orientation. There were two pilgrimages, for instance, to the shrine of St Thomas at Canterbury. In the course of detailing the great variety and frequency of Margaret's pilgrimages, Schnitker argues that Margaret demonstrated a genuine religious

devotion, and that her pilgrimages were not simply a *pro forma* ceremonial demonstration of the wealth and prestige of a noble lady.

Margaret of York makes a peripheral appearance in Charlotte Bauer-Smith's "Mapping Family Lines: A Late Fifteenth-Century Example of Genealogical Display." The husband of Margaret of York, Charles the Bold, was likely the individual who commissioned, or for whom was commissioned, the genealogical roll preserved in the Newberry Library and analyzed by Bauer-Smith. In the roll, eighty-five men and women (not including Margaret of York) are represented by their coats-of-arms. The entire roll has not survived, but the extant roll with its heraldry and Latin text, together with its visual layout, strongly suggests that the roll was, as Bauer-Smith says, a primarily visual statement of the awesome lineage of the Valois dukes of Burgundy and the propriety of the duchy of Burgundy being accorded the status of an independent kingdom by reviving the long departed kingdom of Lotharingia. The aspirations reflected in the roll, likely dating to 1467 or 1468, came to naught, but Bauer-Smith explains the roll as a bold statement of Burgundian ducal ambition.

Aspiration and admonition to be of good reputation is central to Candace Gregory's "Raising the Good Wife: Mothers and Daughters in Fifteenth-Century England." Gregory provides an enlightening reading of the poem popular in the fifteenth century that has come to be known as *How the Good Wyf Taughte Hir Doughtir*. Gregory argues that the poem should not be categorized simply as a guide to assist a mother in raising a daughter. The poem can be seen to esteem motherhood, to define societal values for women, and to clarify female identities and expected standards of behavior. The high value placed upon motherhood meant that the mother-daughter relationship was of special significance since mothers of daughters were training mothers-to-be. The poem, appearing to be by a mother for the benefit of her daughter, is in fact by an unknown author (likely a male cleric) instructing mothers about how to be mothers. Furthermore, by discussing standards for female behavior, the poem taught women how to be women. The poem is more than an etiquette text, Gregory tells us, because it teaches values as well as behavior. The value system presented is one of domestic values primarily, but values having wide influence beyond the confines of the normally female-dominated household. The urban wife of middling class is at center stage, and she is to avoid shame and scandal, and be prepared to be judged and monitored by others while remembering the impor-

tance of reputation; gossip was a fact of life and could be a blessing or a bane for one's reputation. Gregory notes also the significant role for society of women as educators, as illustrated by the poem. In this and other matters, Gregory suggests that the poem is more complex than has hitherto been appreciated.

Accepted standards for female behavior in the fifteenth century is central to Helen Maurer's "Delegitimizing Lancaster: The Yorkist Use of Gendered Propaganda during the Wars of the Roses." Maurer unfolds a story of the developing reputation of Margaret of Anjou, who was married in 1445 to King Henry VI of England. High expectations for the marriage existed in England, as queen Margaret was expected to provide an heir to the throne. Maurer traces the growth of dissatisfaction that Margaret was very slow to become pregnant, and the unease for the kingdom lacking an heir to the throne. By the time Margaret did become pregnant, the political situation in England was ripe for violent partisanship. Maurer traces the development of the rumor of the illegitimacy and therefore throne-unworthiness of the son of Henry VI and Margaret. When the son and first child of the royal couple, Edward of Lancaster, was born in October 1453 there was relief that an heir to the throne had been produced. From that bright acceptance of the royal birth, the combination of King Henry's failure to rule effectively, Margaret's perceived inappropriate female assertiveness in government, and the political ambitions of the House of York, all played into the denigration of Margaret and therefore also of her husband and son; the circumstances of the situation, as described by Maurer, provided grist for the Yorkist propaganda mill. Hints first arose that young Edward was a changeling. Then later rumors began to question Margaret's chastity, and that the prince was not the king's son, and that moreover the possible private transgression of the queen in the royal chamber engendered public disorder in the kingdom. Curiously, Margaret was no longer derided as a woman trying to wear the pants in the family after King Henry was captured by his Yorkist rivals in 1465.

Behavior, custom, and emotion are a part of the essay contributed to this volume by Karen Bezella-Bond. If the Newberry roll discussed by Bauer-Smith has about it an air of impossible political romance, representing the dreams of Charles the Bold, Bezella-Bond steps directly into literary romance with her "Blood and Roses: Maytime and Revival in the *Morte Darthur*." Bezella-Bond directs her attention to the interest in fifteenth-century England in Arthurian romance,

and the efforts of devotees to live or reenact the court of King Arthur, particularly to the contribution made to things Arthurian by Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*. Bezella-Bond views the reenactment of Maytime celebrations as a quintessential expression of fifteenth-century folk to reenter an Arthurian epoch that was both exciting and frightening, as Maying could be both fun and frolic or grim and illicit. Malory seems to be saying, as Bezella-Bond puts it: "Gather ye rosebuds . . . at your peril." Maying might be as bright and cheerful as flowers, but flowers fade and die; reenacting the past might be jolly, but the past is dead and beyond recovery.

Behavior and things Arthurian are also to be found in "Censoring Disobedient Subjects: Narrative of Treason and Royal Authority in Fifteenth-Century England" by Kay Harris. Harris opens her essay with a complaint drawn from Malory's *Morte Darthur* about warfare in Arthur's kingdom, while noting that Arthur was a king who punished those who spoke evil of him. Very smoothly, Harris then moves along the borders of literature and history with her discussion of two aspects of treason prosecutions in fifteenth-century England: bills of attainder and prosecutions relating to conspiring for or imagining the king's death. Harris argues that in both legal processes the sovereign authority was attempting to control the liberty of subjects to speak: with attainder because the accused could not speak to defend themselves against the passage of a bill, and with imagining the king's death because it was in essence treason by word. In her analysis of the notion of treason as words and that such words when spoken could cause treason to come into existence and to spread as if it were a disease, Harris makes an illuminating contribution to the history of ideas as reflected both in legal procedures and in the *Morte Darthur*.

Like Kay Harris, Daniel Thiery addresses an aspect of disorder in fifteenth-century English society. Thiery is interested in the influence of religion upon aggressive behavior in "Welcome to the Parish. Remove your Cap and Stop Assaulting your Neighbor." He is curious about the tension within a society that accepted a degree of violence as normal because of chivalric notions and the religious ideology of that society which for the most part condemned violence. Thiery examines a series of recorded cases seeking to discover the methods employed by clergymen to diminish the air of legitimacy that English society bestowed upon violence as a means of dispute resolution. One method the clergy employed was to define sacred spaces, such as parish churches, where violence was illegitimate. The sacrament

of the eucharist and the passing of the *pax* were other methods used to bring home to parishioners the preference of charity over violence in human relationships. Thiery is convinced that clerical efforts to delegitimize violence did meet with a degree of success, even if only in such instances as people in potentially violent situations being given an avenue to back down so as not to tarnish their reputations by acting violently.

Reputation is one of the elements in John Leland's "Witchcraft and the Woodvilles: A Standard Medieval Smear?" Leland wonders if Richard of Gloucester believed that Elizabeth Woodville, widow of Richard's brother King Edward IV, was using witchcraft against him? Could it be, Leland asks, that fear of witchcraft played a part in bringing Richard to take the decision to seize the throne and become King Richard III? Leland offers a discussion of astrology and magic, together with examples of the employment of such arts in political life, and builds a case for the plausibility of Richard of Gloucester being motivated by fears of witchcraft being used against him in the summer of 1483. John Leland offers a glimpse of what place magic might have in high political culture, while Peter Fleming represents provincial urban culture with "Making History: Culture, Politics and *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*." One portion of *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* survives as one of the earliest chronicles to have been written in an English provincial town, and thus what it can tell students of history about the cultural milieu of Bristol in the late fifteenth century is a matter of intrinsic importance. Fleming offers a summary of the contents and sources for the chronicle, discusses the matter of authorship, and suggests that the purpose of the chronicle was to put the best possible and most politically acceptable face on the actions of those who directed the affairs of Bristol in the late fifteenth century. Bristol was not always in step with the course of national politics, and the Bristol chronicle, as Fleming shows, puts a curious spin on some events in fifteenth-century Bristol's history.

The reputation of King Henry VII has been given varied colorings by historians over the years. In "Rethinking Henry VII: The Man and His Piety in the Context of the Observant Franciscans," Virginia Henderson presents a picture of the king's personality drawn from her experience as an art historian researching the objects of Henry's artistic and architectural patronage. Henderson's Henry VII is not the slick, avaricious monarch of the common view, who patronized religious foundations out of a mighty fear for the fate of his

soul. Henderson sees in Henry's personality a genuine religious piety, and she supports her view with the evidence provided by the Lady Chapel Henry caused to be built within Westminster Abbey and Henry's deep respect for the Observant Franciscans. Henry's interest in the Observant Franciscans is attributed to the experiences of fourteen years as an exile in Brittany before 1485. Moreover, Henderson musters evidence to bolster her opinion that Henry was entirely representative of his time and experience in the manner in which he expressed his piety.

A. C. R.

Prescott, Arizona, July 2003

FIGURES

belonging to *Mapping Family Lines: A Late Fifteenth-Century Example of
Genealogical Display* by Charlotte Bauer-Smith



Fig. 2. Newberry/UTUC Ms. 166. Courtesy of the Joint Acquisition Program of the Newberry Library and the Rare and Special Collections Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

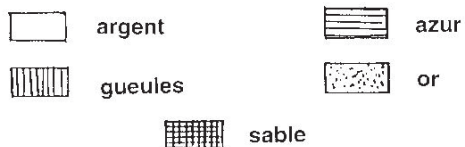
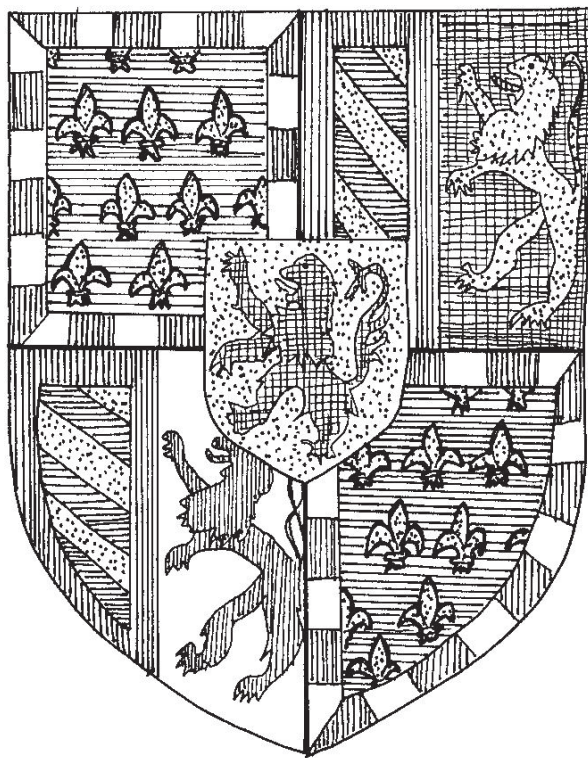


Fig. 3. Modern Arms of Burgundy, adopted in 1430. After illustration in Michel Belotte, *La Bourgogne au Moyen-Age*, (Academie de Dijon Centre Regional de recherche et de documentation pedagogiques: Dijon, 1972).



Fig. 4. Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166, roundel for Charles of Orléans. Courtesy of the Joint Acquisition Program of the Newberry Library and the Rare and Special Collections Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

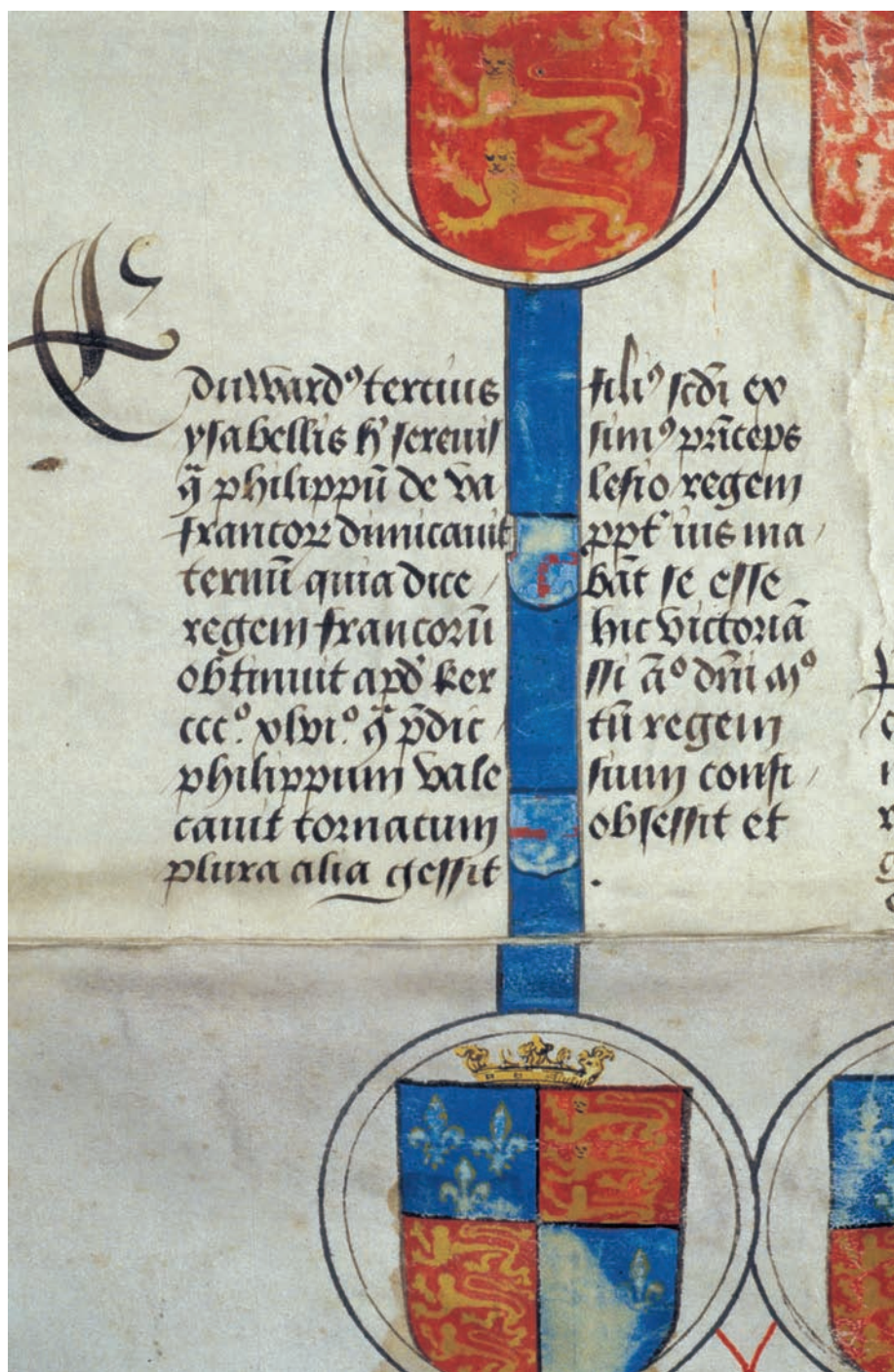
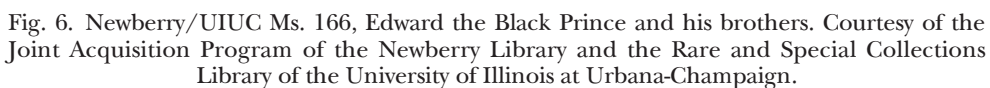


Fig. 5. Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166, entry for Edward III with “*dimicauit*”. Courtesy of the Joint Acquisition Program of the Newberry Library and the Rare and Special Collections Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



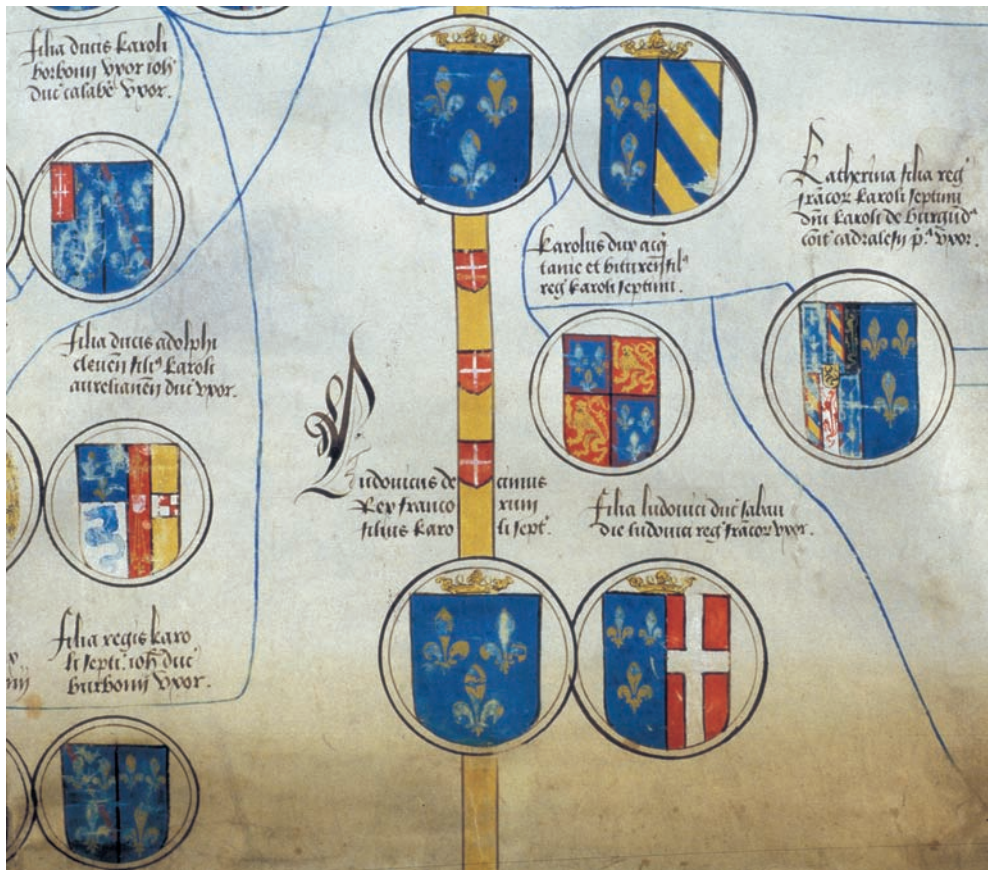


Fig. 7. Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166, Louis XI and siblings. Courtesy of the Joint Acquisition Program of the Newberry Library and the Rare and Special Collections Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

FIGURES

belonging to *Making History: Culture, Politics and The Maire of Bristol is Kalendar*
by Peter Fleming



Fig. 1. *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar: The Nativity*. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bristol Record Office.



Fig. 2. *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*: View of Bristol. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bristol Record Office.

Willms

Conquestor.



Incipit secundum principalem huius libri de conquestu.

Fig. 3. *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*: William the Conqueror. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bristol Record Office.

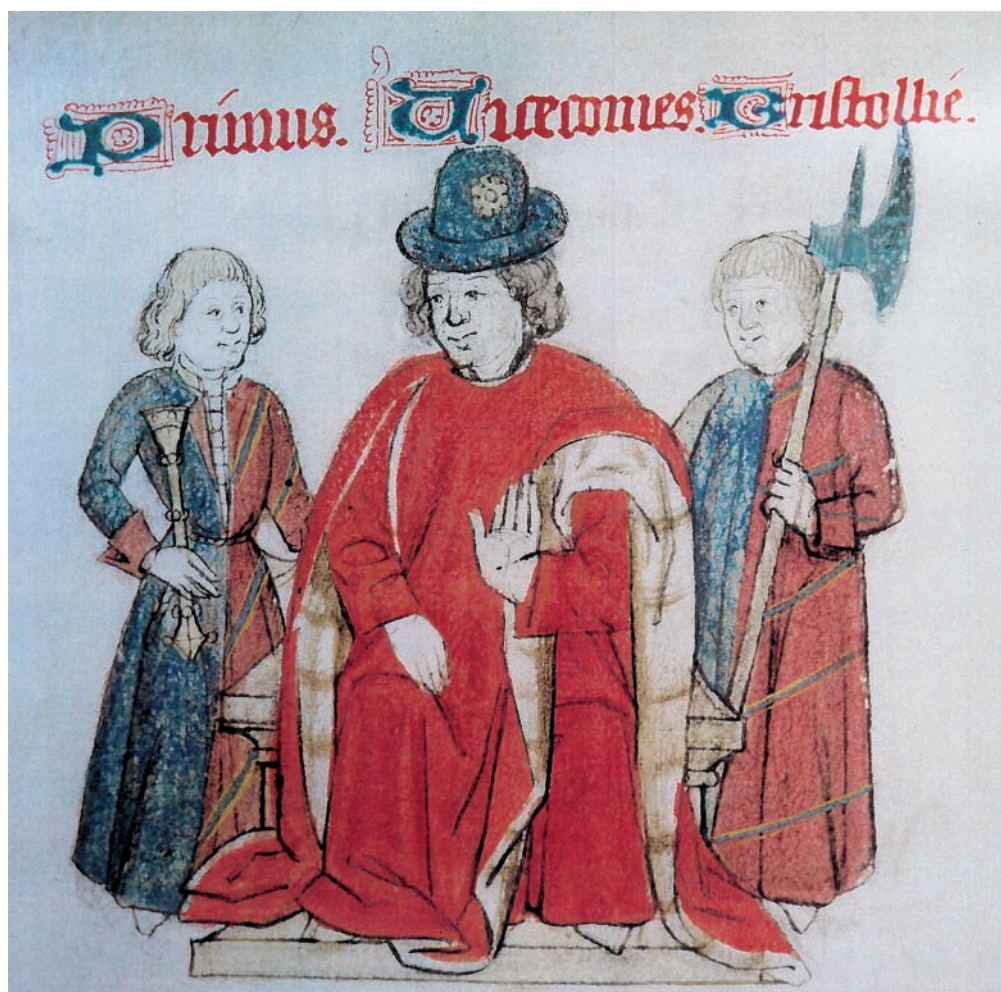


Fig. 4. *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*: The First Sheriff of Bristol. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bristol Record Office.



Fig. 5. *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*: Henry VI. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bristol Record Office.



Fig. 6. *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar: The Mayor-Making*. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bristol Record Office.

FIGURES

belonging to *Rethinking Henry VII: The Man and His Piety in the Context of the
Observant Franciscans* by Virginia K. Henderson



Fig. 1. Slipknot, detail of the grille of the chantry chapel of Henry VII, Chapel of Henry VII, Westminster Abbey
(Photo by author).

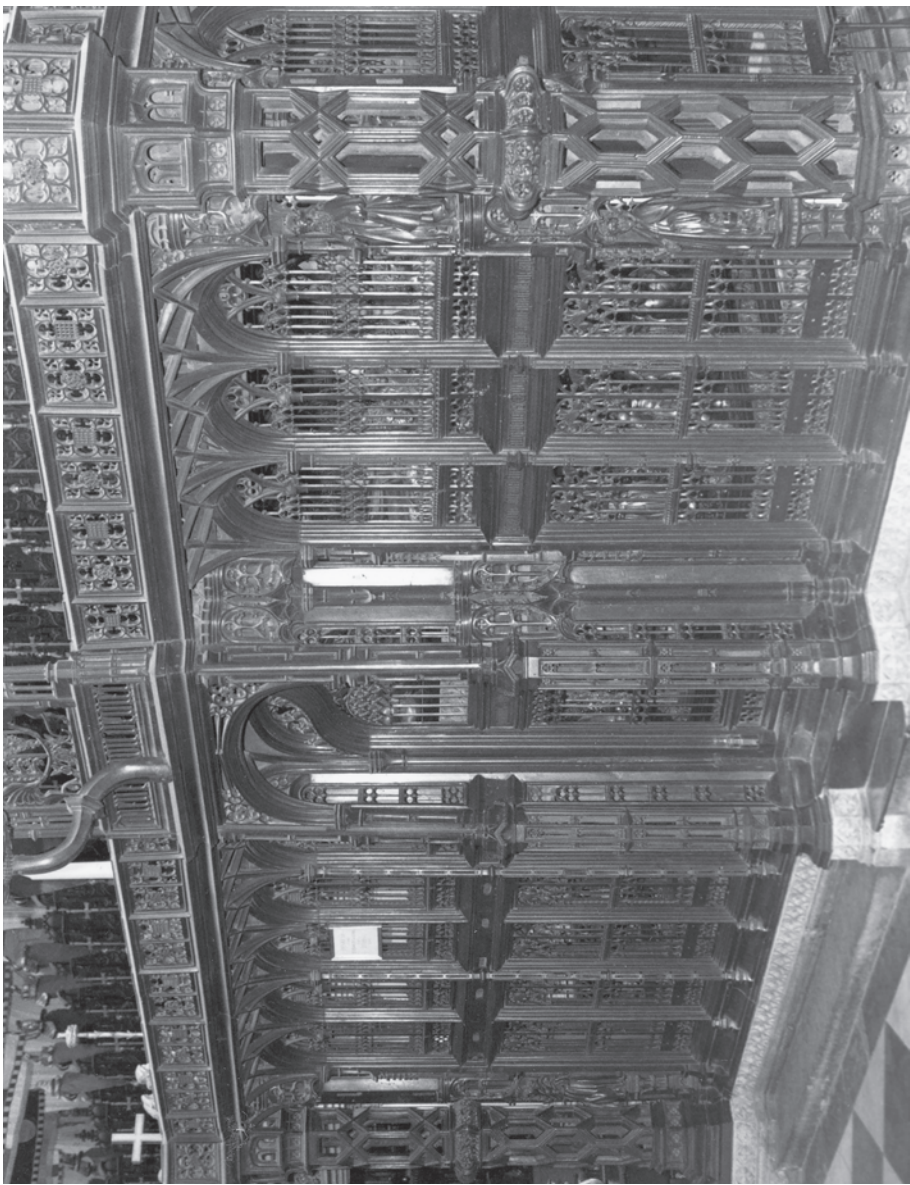


Fig. 2. Chantry chapel of Henry VII, Chapel of Henry VII, Westminster Abbey (Photo by author).



Fig. 3. Anne of Brittany and the Ordre de la Cordelière, *Histoire de la Toison d'Or*, Bibliothèque nationale MS Fr 138, folio lv, c. 1492-98 (Bibliothèque nationale de France).



Fig. 4. Angel frieze of the Chapel of Henry VII, Westminster Abbey, south side (Photo by author).



Fig. 5. Angel-priest, Chapel of Henry VII, Westminster Abbey, chancel arch (Photo by author).



Fig. 6. St. Agatha, Chapel of Henry VII, Westminster Abbey, north side (Photo: ©Crown copyright.NMR).



Fig. 7. St. Sebastian, Chapel of Henry VII, Westminster Abbey, northeast apsidal chapel (Photo by author).



Fig. 8. Angel, Cathedral of Albi, choir enclosure (Photo by author).



Fig. 9. Annunciation to the Virgin, Cathedral of Albi, choirscreen (Photo by author).



Fig. 10. Imago Pietatis, Cathedral of Albi, Chapel of St. Michael (Photo by author).

THE “LANCASTRIANIZATION” OF THE NORTH IN THE REIGN OF HENRY IV, 1399–1413

Mark Arvanigian

In the summer of 1399, Henry Bolingbroke, son and heir to the recently deceased John of Gaunt, returned to England with small force of French and English followers to reclaim his confiscated inheritance from a recalcitrant King Richard II. Along the way, Henry was moved to depose King Richard in a virtually bloodless coup, and thereby claim the English throne for himself.¹ In so doing, King Henry IV founded a new dynasty based in part on the power and resources of that great fourteenth-century anomaly, the duchy of Lancaster, and thus created also the preconditions for much of the political uncertainty of the fifteenth century. Long before his journey toward the usurpation, however, contemporaries recognized Henry as the natural leader of the political community—a fact that Richard understood all too well. Bolingbroke’s exile was, after all, partly an attempt by the king to remove him from the milieu of English politics, thereby securing more completely his grip on government.² Yet in spite of the fact that the duchy of Lancaster provided him with abundant resources, Henry IV has long been burdened with the reputation amongst modern historians of weak usurper, perpetually short of friends, money and political allies.³ This view has gone largely unchallenged until very recently, and to date no comprehensive study of the reign has appeared.⁴ Yet this is a view that clearly has considerable flaws.

Both as an usurping noble and as King of England, Henry made

¹ M. J. Bennett, *Richard II and the Revolution of 1399* (Stroud, 1999).

² Richard II’s political orientation has been the subject of considerable debate, with a range of opinions expressed. Discussions can be found in Simon Walker, “Richard II’s views on Kingship,” R. Archer and S. Walker, eds., *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England* (London, 1995), pp. 49–63; and Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven, 1997), pp. 235–69 and 366–404.

³ A. L. Brown, “The Reign of Henry IV,” S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross and R. A. Griffiths, eds., *Fifteenth Century England, 1399–1509* (Manchester, 1972), pp. 1–24. See also J. L. Kirby, *Henry IV of England* (1970), *passim*.

⁴ A recent and welcome response to Brown has been made by Douglas Biggs, “The Reign of Henry IV: The Revolution of 1399 and the Establishment of the Lancastrian Regime,” Nigel Saul, ed., *Fourteenth Century England*, 1 (2000), pp. 195–210.

sound use of a number of men whom we have simply termed "Lancastrians," hearkening back to their days of service to John of Gaunt. Because of the inherent potential of the duchy of Lancaster as the focus for a political party, Simon Walker's study of the so-called Lancastrian affinity has proven to be the proper starting point to any study of Henry IV's reign.⁵ His systematic treatment of Gaunt's retaining has provided students of Lancastrian government with better access to many of the resources later available to Henry as king, and has also demonstrated the clear relationship between the composition of the affinity before 1399 and that of Henry's early government.⁶

Individual studies of Henry's friends and supporters have also shed further light on the situation. The new king's relationship with the Percies, for example, has been scrutinized at some length, as the two Henrys Percy—Hotspur and the earl of Northumberland—have until recently been seen as Henry's strong right arm in 1399, and a dominant force in his government thereafter.⁷ Yet early Lancastrian government, even in the North, was never as simple as the implementation and development of Percy power. R. L. Storey is correct in noting that, in spite of their stature in the region, the Percies were never entirely trusted with the whole of the Scottish Border, by Richard II, John of Gaunt or Henry IV.⁸ Instead, the structure of Lancastrian political society in the North bore greater resemblance to a complex network, cemented by bonds of family, personal loyalty and patronage, all functioning in a rather diffuse but still politically reliable fashion. This network allowed the new king to survive his turbulent early years and build a base of loyal support which both he and his son would enjoy.⁹

⁵ Simon Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity, 1361–1399* (Oxford, 1990).

⁶ For this relationship, see Biggs, "Reign of Henry IV," p. 196.

⁷ J. M. W. Bean, "Henry IV and the Percies," *History*, 44 (1959), pp. 212–27. Other treatments of the Percy family include N. Weiss, "'A Power in the North'? The Percies in the Fifteenth Century," *Historical Journal*, 19 (1976), pp. 501–9; A. Tuck, "The Percies and the Community of Northumberland in the Later Fourteenth Century," A. Goodman and A. Tuck, eds., *War and Border Societies in the Middle Ages* (London, 1992), pp. 178–95.

⁸ R. L. Storey, "The North of England," Chrimes et al., eds., *Fifteenth Century England*, p. 137; G. L. Harriss, "The King and his Magnates," G. L. Harriss, ed., *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 31–51; Jeremy Catto, "The King's Servants," Harriss, ed. *Henry V*, pp. 75–95.

⁹ Biggs, "Reign of Henry IV," pp. 195–210, has commented briefly on the North, but stops short of ascribing to Henry an anti-Percy policy, in favor of the earl of Westmorland. I would not.

Many of Walker's old duchy retainers—knights, barons and esquires—have been studied quite extensively, especially those close to the king. Two treatments of the career of Sir Thomas Erpingham have painted an interesting and complex picture of the man as soldier, royal servant, and shire knight,¹⁰ while Barber's study of John Norbury demonstrates the level of patronage available to Henry's inner circle.¹¹ A recent treatment of the colorful career of Janico Dartasso has followed the exploits of yet another of Henry's chivalric knights, who though previously in the service of Richard II, nonetheless became a familiar figure in Henry's household.¹² In all of these cases, we meet Henry's military household. All were valued for their abilities in the field, and in the cases of Norbury, Erpingham and others, were long-time servants of the duchy. In some ways, this essay will extend the study of Henry's knights of the shire by including many of his important allies in the North, who though not among his principal military comrades in the 1390's, nonetheless provided him with valuable service later. This essay will also engage with another theme introduced in Walker's study of Dartasso, namely, that it was possible, indeed common, for even some knights previously close to Richard II to hold positions of trust in Henry's early administration. A. L. Brown has marked this as one of Henry's principal weaknesses, arguing that his generosity erred on the side of carelessness.¹³ But his ability to achieve consensus and reconciliation was nonetheless critical in extending his support in the North from former duchy retainers to the larger political community. For example, Henry was successful in separating numerous northern knights of the shire from their rebellious natural leaders, the Percies, and many were instrumental in helping to sustain his rule in the face of serious opposition after 1399.

¹⁰ T. E. John, "Sir Thomas Erpingham," *Norfolk Archaeology* 35 (1973), pp. 96–109; H. E. Castor, "The Duchy of Lancaster and the Rule of East Anglia, 1399–1440: A Prelude to the Pastons," R. E. Archer, ed., *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century* (Stroud, 1995).

¹¹ M. Barber, "John Norbury (c. 1350–1414): an Esquire of Henry IV," *English Historical Review*, 68 (1953), pp. 66–76.

¹² Simon Walker, "Janico Dartasso: Chivalry, Nationality and the Man-at-Arms," *History*, 84, no. 273 (1999), pp. 31–51. Because of Dartasso's foreign origins, the author has studied his career from the perspective of a mercenary soldier, as easily attached to Richard II or the earl of Northumberland (as in the 1380's) as Henry IV. This sort of political flexibility echoes throughout early Lancastrian England.

¹³ Brown, "The Reign of Henry IV," p. 6.

The period 1399–1405 was one of intense political conflict in the Northeast, and for that reason Henry became deeply involved in the region's politics from the very start of the reign, employing a deliberate, thoughtful policy there. His strategy was straightforward: create a network of support among certain of the most powerful elements of landed society, aggressively promote their interests, and then govern through their agency. This projection of power quite often involved grants of office and formal commissions, though in other instances simply meant enjoying the informal support of trusted servants, friends, and kinsmen. Many of Henry's men in the North were old duchy retainers already in place by 1399; others were more recent additions to his affinity, swayed perhaps by the righteousness of Henry's quarrel with Richard II or by their own dissatisfaction with the former king, or perhaps by Henry's generosity. Many therefore became Lancastrians during and after 1399, when support for Richard's government finally broke down entirely and power swung eventually to Henry.¹⁴ Many of these newcomers were men of stature, property and power, and their participation lent weight and comfort to Henry's endeavor. In fact, they were so numerous after 1399 that it has tempted historians to assume that the region was already an established Lancastrian stronghold before Henry's usurpation. But was it?

A closer look reveals a more complicated picture. For example, the county of Northumberland was essentially Percy country, and if we can judge their motives in view of later acts, they seem not to have ever been especially interested in becoming the new king's "men in the North." Over the years the Percies had developed into something of a problem for the English government, even while achieving success in their defense of the Scottish March. Indeed, the central problem *was their success*, the singularity of which brought them still more power and influence in the Northeast.¹⁵ Richard II attempted on several occasions in vain to exclude them from border service, yet they alone seemed able to manage the northern march in times of unrest.¹⁶ Richard had never been comfortable with Percy control of the region's large army, but he required their service to maintain

¹⁴ Bennett, *Richard II*, pp. 136–91.

¹⁵ Tuck, "The Percies and the Community of Northumberland," pp. 178–95.

¹⁶ Alastair J. Macdonald, *Border Bloodshed: Scotland, England and France at War, 1369–1403* (Phantassie, 2000), p. 75; A. Tuck, "Richard II and the Border Magnates," *Northern History*, 3 (1968), pp. 27–52.

the peace.¹⁷ Thus in March of 1382, after a failed experiment in governing the border without the them, the king's lieutenant of the marches, John of Gaunt, returned the earl of Northumberland to governance as warden of a new "Middle March." The earl later regained joint custody of both East and Middle Marches combined, along with John, Lord Neville and another veteran of high royal service, the bishop of Durham, Walter Skirlaw.¹⁸ Professor Tuck has detailed this complex series of events, and for our purposes it is enough to identify the great reluctance of both Richard and Gaunt to allow the Percies unfettered control of the border.¹⁹

Ironically, in a letter to the king dated 11 July 1399, the duke of Aumale wrote to the already-departed Richard II, asking his permission to release the northern marches to the earl of Northumberland. By that date, Henry had already landed in England, though it is unclear whether Aumale knew this at the time of writing; there is no mention of it, or other indication, in the letter itself. If he did, however, it might indicate either that he judged Henry's motives benign (unlikely), or that he was very carefully, and less than openly, abetting his cause. The latter might yet prove to be the more elegant explanation, given the duke's circumstances. His father, Edmund of Langley, was less than enthusiastic about his own role as England's guardian in the absence of King Richard, and he later served as a key component of Henry IV's government up to the time of his own death. It may well have been that neither he nor his son was especially taken with Richard's political prospects in the face of serious opposition, or with his treatment of their kinsman, Henry. John of Gaunt had been a pillar of Richard's government, and had remained loyal to Edward III's dynasty; perhaps Langley and Aumale took exception to Richard's high-handed treatment of Gaunt's inheritance and heir. In any event, already focused on the task ahead in Ireland,

¹⁷ C. J. Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law: The Anglo-Scottish Border Lands in the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1998), p. 101.

¹⁸ *Rot[uli] Scot[iae]*, 2 vols., Record Commission (1814–19), 2, pp. 40–43. One-time keeper of Richard II's privy seal, Skirlaw's rise through the diocesan ranks began in earnest in 1386, when he was consecrated bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, only to gain a transfer to the wealthier diocese of Bath and Wells later in that same year. In 1388, he was again promoted, this time via his translation to the episcopal see of Durham, where he took up the temporalities in September of that year. *Handbook of British Chronology*, E. B. Fryde, D. E. Greenway, S. Porter, and I. Roy, eds., 3rd edition (London, 1986), p. 228, 242 and 253.

¹⁹ Tuck, "Richard II and the Border Magnates," pp. 27–52.

Richard communicated his assent to the request, and Aumale duly left the northern march to Henry Percy.²⁰ In his reply, Richard gave no indication that he feared the appointment, or the consequences that might follow it.²¹

Henry's first Exchequer rolls reaffirm a consensus view that only the Percies could stem the tide of the almost certain hostilities to come from north of the border with the sudden dynastic change in England.²² The earl of Northumberland was remunerated separately for his overall governance of the Scottish Border, and more specifically for his service as warden of the West March and constable of Carlisle Castle. Moreover, his son Sir Henry Percy was made warden of the East March and constable of Berwick, and was well remunerated by the crown for his efforts.²³ These responsibilities were clearly their reward for assisting Henry in his usurpation, and the Scottish Border just as surely held pride of place among their aspirations. A great landowner in Yorkshire, the earl of Northumberland's marriage to Maud Lucy gained him that family's great lordship in Cumberland, and confirms his commitment to a new, more northerly provincial bias. In Yorkshire, the Percies were one great family among many; in the borders, they stood alone, unique in both their social and legal status, and in the power provided to them by virtue of their offices, and their command of a great standing army—the only one of its kind in England. The earl was therefore understandably keen to retain the warden's army that Richard had finally granted him in the summer of 1399—perhaps for the purpose of beginning the hard work of forging a distinct lordship in the far North, using the resources of the English Crown.²⁴

This situation also presented the new king with an obvious conundrum. The constituent counties of the Northeast—the North Riding of Yorkshire, the palatinate of Durham, and Northumberland—were

²⁰ P(ublic) R(ecord) O(ffice) C 47/22/11/10.

²¹ Storey marks 1388 as the beginning of a more-or-less permanent positioning of the Percies as wardens of the East March. Storey, "North of England," p. 134.

²² Macdonald, *Border Bloodshed*, p. 133.

²³ PRO E 403/564, E 403/565, E 403/566. Among other things, this was to pay for the standing contingent of 12 knights and 320 archers that accompanied the earl. The amount paid for Carlisle and the west march was to increase to £1,500 in wartime, a sum that would roughly match double these numbers.

²⁴ This is bound up with the so-called Douglas grant, explained in Peter McNiven, "The Scottish Policy of the Percies and the Strategy of the Rebellion of 1403," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 62 (1979), pp. 498–530, 503–7.

critically important to the maintenance of an orderly kingdom.²⁵ Yet the county of Northumberland was too far north for the king to have entertained any real hopes of effective, direct control. Richard II's numerous attempts at indirect governance via his court favorites—undertaken generally in times of peace—certainly were a contributing factor in Percy opposition to his rule. By contrast, Henry IV seems to have understood this single, critical reality: the Scottish March had to be maintained, but by a form of indirect governance, as dictated by a character and geography that left it hostile to direct rule by outsiders. Henry clearly saw that while the Percies had governed there for much of his own lifetime, the region nonetheless remained politically unstable. This seems to have made an impression on the new king as he undertook the formation of a regional policy there.

The genesis of that policy, and the emergence of a discernible Lancastrian strategy in the Northeast, began quite naturally with the king's patronage of others who had supported him in 1399. Firstly, R. L. Storey's assertion that there was no great constitutional standoff in Henry's reign between the crown on the one hand and the baronage on the other, is surely correct.²⁶ Perhaps unlike Richard II, Henry dealt with the barons—who had so recently been his peers—as he found them, and for his trouble became both the victim and the beneficiary of their internecine rivalries. Yet Storey's other conclusion—that Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester, was the main cause of the Percy rebellions—may have less to recommend it.²⁷ Worcester probably received greater preferment than he had any right to expect from the new king, and was certainly one of the great beneficiaries of Henry's conciliatory attitude toward so many of Richard's high-ranking functionaries. Yet as McNiven has shown, it is far more likely that the disappointment of Hotspur and Northumberland over

²⁵ This line of demarcation is a reasonable one, given that those with significant landed interests tended to respect neither Tyne nor Tees as meaningful borders. Only the palatinate of Durham and its unusual political makeup gave it some meaningful distinction; yet even there, elites often exercised influence and office both within the palatinate and without, occasionally even simultaneously. For an example of such secular pluralism, see the biographical entry for Sir Ralph Eure in J. S. Roskell, Linda Clark, and Carole Rawcliffe, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1386–1421*, iii (1993), 38–43; and Mark Arvanigian, "Landed Society and the Governance of the North in the Later Middle Ages: The Case of Sir Ralph Eure," *Medieval Prosopography*, 22 (2001), pp. 65–87.

²⁶ Storey, "North of England," p. 135.

²⁷ Storey, "North of England," p. 136.

border matters led to their rebellion against Henry.²⁸ Storey in fact admits himself that the offices of March warden, as they had developed during the last quarter of the fourteenth century, had become something rather more formidable than any king could comfortably live with, particularly when members of the Percy family inhabited those offices.²⁹ The wardens were certainly critical to the region's security. Moreover, with the decline in land values along many stretches of the Scottish Border, their hefty salaries had also become important sources of income and patronage in a region where both were otherwise somewhat scarce. Indeed, a cursory study of land values in the far North in this period reveals waste and decay owing to border hostilities which ranged from complete devastation to a more moderate reduction in landed revenues, perhaps 40–50% below their customary figure, in North Northumberland.³⁰

Other issues led to further complications. An apparent controversy was brewing amongst certain other members of the political establishment over Henry's financial relationship with the Percies, and their apparent preferment.³¹ By early 1403, a rumor, discussed at some length by the council, had surfaced alleging that the king had already paid Hotspur and Northumberland over £60,000 since 1399—a princely and highly implausible sum.³² This was likely no more than the propaganda of a government that, by that point, had already resigned itself to an open rift with the Percies, and may even have been created by Henry himself to help turn baronial opinion against them. In any case, the very existence of such rumors certainly indi-

²⁸ McNiven, "The Scottish Policy of the Percies," *passim*. Much has now been written on this subject, such as the valuable essay by J. M. W. Bean, "The Percies and their Estates in Scotland," *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th Series, 35 (1957), pp. 91–99.

²⁹ Storey, "North of England," p. 137.

³⁰ PRO DURH 3/13, fo. 214rv. Alastair Macdonald has also commented upon this in *Border Bloodshed*, pp. 210–11 and 142. The economic impact of Scottish troubles in North Northumberland is discussed at length in R. A. Lomas, "The Impact of Border Warfare: The Scots and South Tweedside, c. 1290–c. 1520," *Scottish Historical Review*, 75: 200 (1996), pp. 143–67. For land values in the palatinate of Durham and its environs, see R. H. Britnell, "Feudal Reaction after the Black Death in the Palatinate of Durham," *Past and Present*, 128 (1990), pp. 28–47 and "The Priory of Durham and its Demesnes in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, 31 (1978), pp. 339–53; and M. E. Arvanigian, "Free Rents in the Palatinate of Durham, and the Crisis of the Late 1430's," *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th Series, 24 (1996), pp. 99–108.

³¹ Bean, "Henry IV and the Percies," p. 222.

³² *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, ed. N. H. Nicolas (1834), i, pp. 203–4 and 207.

cates that they had about them the ring of plausibility. Although Henry had neither the financial resources nor the inclination to carry through on commitments of that magnitude (and while we cannot know the exact nature of the arrangements made between Bolingbroke and the earl of Northumberland prior to 1399), such an arrangement very probably existed.

Yet we cannot be certain that a gloomy picture of Henry's finances, which Kirby faults for most of Henry's difficulties, was indeed at fault for the king's lingering debts. Henry may not have been quite as bereft as that. D. L. Biggs has recently argued that Henry made good use of clerical subsidies and loans in the early part of his reign, most notably from bishops Wykeham of Winchester and Stafford of Exeter.³³ In addition, Henry undoubtedly leaned heavily upon the broad shoulders of his half-brother, Bishop Beaufort of Lincoln, his redoubtable mentor Archbishop Arundel, and the ambassador Bishop Skirlaw of Durham, for support. However, clerical subsidies, and especially episcopal loans, were more easily accessed, and therefore more useful as instruments of royal finance, somewhat later in the reign. This would have followed the elevation of Beaufort to the see of Winchester, and of the king's clerks Henry Bowet and Thomas Langley to the wealthy sees of York in 1405 and Durham in 1406, respectively. In broad terms, therefore, the Lancastrianization of the upper levels of the English Church—like that of the country at large—was a process still in its adolescence in 1403. It probably did not fully mature until the second half of Henry's reign, by which time the pool of potential royal resources—political as well as financial—had been demonstrably expanded.

In the North as elsewhere, the process of Lancastrianization took some time, a fact that certainly led Henry to be more conciliatory in political terms.³⁴ Thus, men like Richard Clifford and Thomas Percy, who had both served Henry's predecessor at the highest level of government, could for a time retain their offices. In a similar vein, the king was willing, over the near term, to opt for the stability of Percy control of the far North and the marches. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that he had in his mind a long-term arrangement. The evidence in fact suggests the opposite. Financial recompense of

³³ Biggs, "Reign of Henry IV," p. 203.

³⁴ S. Walker, "Yorkshire Justices of the Peace, 1389–1413," *English Historical Review*, 108 (1993), 281–311.

the Percies seems to have been a rather low priority for Henry after 1401, and both he and his council essentially ignored their repeated requests for payment in the months and years leading up to their revolt in 1403.³⁵ In fact, evidence for royal preferment of Hotspur and Northumberland—after the initial round of appointments in 1399—is quite sparse, betraying rather a different pattern of patronage. Indeed, many of the royal grants made to the Percies in 1399 were rapidly proving ephemeral. For example, the important border fortress of Roxburgh—granted to the Percies as part of their responsibilities in the borders in 1399—was by 1402 in the hands of the earl of Westmorland.³⁶ Moreover, the *inability* of the Percies to achieve many of their objectives was also beginning to tell. They failed, for instance, to gain the coveted earldom of Richmond, though as principal farmers and the new king's governors in the far North, they must have expected better. In addition, they were forced to serve as witnesses of the royal grant transferring its ownership to Ralph Neville, their great rival in the region.

Yet the Percies had not been entirely shut out of the new administration. Firstly, in spite of their protestations, the Percies did receive payment for their service as wardens of the marches. In 1400, the earl of Northumberland was paid £1,868 for his role as constable and overall governor of the marches, for the maintenance of a permanent force of 12 knights and 320 archers. He received a further £665 as warden of the West March, for the array of troops and the garrisoning of Carlisle Castle.³⁷ Hotspur, too, collected over £800 for his role as warden of the East March and constable of Berwick.³⁸ Yet both obviously viewed these sums as insufficient remuneration, a fact which caused them to complain openly to the crown and the council. Hotspur provides a fine illustration of their mood by early 1401, in the form of a series of important letters to the king's council from North Wales, where he was also chief justiciar.³⁹ In them, he asks in no uncertain terms for further payments from the government for his service in the marches of Wales and Scotland. In a letter dated 17 May 1401, he points out that without payment nei-

³⁵ *Proceedings and Ordinances*, i, p. 204.

³⁶ Biggs, "Reign of Henry IV," p. 198.

³⁷ PRO E 403/565.

³⁸ PRO E 403/566 and E 403/567.

³⁹ *Proceedings and Ordinances*, i, pp. 145–52.

ther he nor anyone else would be able to provide an army sufficient for the defense of the realm. He argues bitterly that the king should give first, not last, priority to the borders, where lie his greatest enemies.⁴⁰ Yet the exchequer rolls clearly show that Henry dutifully paid the Percies substantial sums of money to provide for that defense.⁴¹ Perhaps these complaints can be read to imply the existence of a prior arrangement between the king and the Percies regarding their role along the Scottish border, an arrangement that included an aggressive border policy to be carried out principally by the Percies, and underwritten by the crown. For his part, Peter McNiven certainly postulated something like this some years ago.⁴² In the final analysis, Henry may have been happy to have the Percies foot some greater part of the bill for this policy themselves, as it was they who stood to benefit most from its ultimate success.

There might of course be another, more straightforward explanation for Henry's parsimony where the Percies were concerned: a simple inability to meet all of his financial commitments. The king, as A. L. Brown and more recently Helen Castor have pointed out, had inherited and now maintained the large and very expensive Lancastrian retinue, one that he expanded as king and continued to utilize extensively to achieve a new set of political ends.⁴³ Because the Lancastrianization of the nation's political establishment was a deliberate, rather than an instantaneous, process, investments were required of the new king to placate those still not fully convinced of his claim, as he was also simultaneously going about the business of implanting his own supporters in key positions. Over time, of course, Henry's investment bore significant fruit. But in its earliest days, he was certainly stretched somewhat thin financially, still employing both members of the old Lancastrian retinue as well as many servants of Richard II, such as the bishop of Durham, Walter Skirlaw, Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester and Richard Clifford. While Edmund Wright has analyzed royal finances in the second half of Henry's reign, further study of the king's early financial health would certainly

⁴⁰ Later events show this to have had an ironic dual meaning, with the crown's greatest enemies lying perhaps on the English, as well as the Scottish, side of the border. *Proceedings and Ordinances*, i, pp. 151–52.

⁴¹ PRO E 403/564, E 403/565 and E 403/566.

⁴² McNiven, "The Scottish Policy of the Percies," p. 530.

⁴³ Brown, "The Reign of Henry IV," p. 19; Helen Castor, *The King, the Crown, and the Duchy of Lancaster* (Oxford, 2000), *passim*.

help elucidate matters further, and might settle the specific question of a potential early cash shortfall more definitively.⁴⁴

Whatever the case, the king's financial *choices* certainly indicate a cogent strategy for governing the North. In common with Richard II, Henry tried to create a stable, governable North without a long-term reliance upon the Percies. Yet unlike his predecessor, he rejected the general approach of relying upon court favorites to do the job. The king instead allied himself closely with Ralph Neville, his brother-in-law and a potential natural rival to the earl of Northumberland in the North. Westmorland became one of the king's closest advisors, and was his strongest supporter among the great magnates of the country. The fact that he wasn't much of a courtier has led some historians to underestimate the strength of their relationship.⁴⁵ Yet Westmorland was husband to the king's half-sister, Joan Beaufort, and both the earl and his father, John Neville, had previously been important retainers of John of Gaunt.⁴⁶ Their relationship was formalized somewhat through the earl's service in various offices early in the reign, such as Marshal of England, and the king showed every sign of understanding the need for a northern governor; Westmorland's suitability for the job was manifest. After all, the king's own father had played something like that role after 1379, after Richard II, like Henry, came to the belief that some form of indirect government was required for the region, if only to subdue the private interests of the Percies.⁴⁷

In this way, Henry IV capitalized on Westmorland's stature in the North, and by 1402 had helped make him a serious rival to Percy hegemony. He encouraged Neville to retain important members of his own household, like Thomas Rempston and John Norbury, thus adding to the growing coterie of Lancastrians already in Neville employ, such as William Gascoigne and William Heron, Lord Say. In 1404, through the agency of the king, the earl retained the younger Thomas Grey of Heaton, whose father had died in 1400 and left

⁴⁴ Edmund Wright, "Henry IV, the Commons and the Recovery of Royal Finances in 1407," in Archer and Walker, eds., *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 65–81.

⁴⁵ Brown, "Reign of Henry IV," p. 8. Westmorland was one of the stalwarts of the Scottish campaign of 1400, bringing with him a company of over 200 men-at-arms and 1,000 archers.

⁴⁶ *John of Gaunt's Register*, E. C. Lodge and R. Somerville, eds., 2 vols., Camden Society, 3rd series, 56 and 57 (1937), i, p. 7; Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, pp. 262–84.

⁴⁷ Neville, *Anglo Scottish Border*, p. 67.

something of a military vacancy in Northumberland.⁴⁸ Westmorland purchased lands and offices, such as the constabulary of Bamburgh Castle, for the younger Sir Thomas, just as he had done years earlier for his father.⁴⁹

Yet the crown's support for the Nevilles after 1399 really fits into a broader pattern of patronizing that family, one first established years earlier by John of Gaunt and Richard II. Henry confirmed all of Westmorland's grants made by Richard II, and proceeded to build on them. Shortly after confirming the earl's comital title granted him in 1397, the new king granted him £300 in annuities from the customs at Newcastle, and made him marshal of England for life.⁵⁰ Less than three weeks later, Westmorland gained custody of the late Lord Dacre's estates during the minority of his heir, which included the barony of Burgh-by-Sands and lands around Kirkoswald and Naworth castles in northeast Cumbria—lands which virtually abutted the great Lucy holdings in the region.⁵¹ For Neville, these served to extend his territorial reach into the borders, and helped link Penrith and Sowerby with his North Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland lands. Moreover, over the next couple of years, the king set about granting the earl numerous estates in Lincolnshire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland and the North Riding. Already in possession of Wark Castle on the River Tweed by a grant of Richard II, Westmorland now received Roxburgh and the Lancastrian fortress of Dunstanburgh, in Northumberland, from Henry IV.⁵²

Yet even these great bequests were mere preludes to the new king's grant to Westmorland of the honor of Richmond, done within days of Henry's assumption of the royal dignity.⁵³ The portion of the honor known as the lordship of Richmond—essentially its North Yorkshire component—geographically linked the earl's two other great seats of power, Raby in Southwest Durham, and Middleham in the North Riding.⁵⁴ It also ended the confusion over control of the honor, which

⁴⁸ "Private Indentures for Life Service in Peace and War, 1278–1476," *Camden Miscellany*, XXXII, Michael Jones and Simon Walker, eds., Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series, 3 (1994), pp. 132–33.

⁴⁹ *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 412.

⁵⁰ *CPR, 1399–1401*, p. 9. This was confirmed that December at Westminster. *CPR, 1399–1401*, p. 202.

⁵¹ Storey, *End of the House of Lancaster*, p. 106.

⁵² *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 372.

⁵³ Enrolled on 20 October 1399. *CPR, 1399–1401*, p. 24.

⁵⁴ As part of his marriage to Joan Beaufort and the legitimization of Gaunt's

itself had been an open and troubling question in Yorkshire politics for some twenty years.⁵⁵ Feudal lordship over the honor had remained at best uncertain for much of the last 15 years of the fourteenth century. Richard II had long used it as a negotiating tool with the duke of Brittany, and had an interest in maintaining its uncertain ownership.⁵⁶ In many ways, the Percies were the obvious choice to eventually succeed to the earldom of Richmond, given their long interest as farmers and its strategic location in the North, and their status as the greatest of the lordship's many farmers.⁵⁷ Richmond would have given them an important foothold in North Yorkshire, and might have acted to balance Neville power there, had that been the king's intention. It was not. Henry's grant of Richmond to the earl of Westmorland represented the start of a new era of firm Lancastrian lordship there, and also marked the end of the Percies as a presence in that part of the country.⁵⁸ They had lobbied for control of both Richmondshire and the Dacre estates, and must have been disappointed not to have had the Northumbrian Umfraville estates and heir transferred to them; their failure in all of these areas is exactly indicative of the direction of Henry's royal policy in the North.

Thus, the Percies and especially the Nevilles were at the core of the king's attempt to reform the region's political landscape. However, others played important supporting roles. For example, Lancastrianism was certainly the driving force for William, Lord Roos, in his support for the new regime. His father, Thomas, Lord Roos of Helmsley, was one of Gaunt's first retainers from the earldom of Richmond, and accompanied him on campaign.⁵⁹ He even held the distinction

Beaufort children by Richard II Middleham was formally resettled upon Ralph Neville in 1397 in tail male. The grant was in part for the purpose of distinguishing the first earl, Joan and their favored heirs on the one hand from the earl's elder (Stafford) children on the other. *Foedera Conventiones, Litterae, et Cuiuscunque Generis Acta Publica*, T. Rymer, ed., 20 vols. (1704–35), ii, p. 530. Middleham Castle was itself a strategic stronghold in what Professor Storey has called the "northern military complex." Storey, "North of England," p. 130.

⁵⁵ *Proceedings and Ordinances*, i, p. 46.

⁵⁶ *Proceedings and Ordinances*, i, *passim*.

⁵⁷ These had included, at various times and among others, the lords Lumley and FitzHugh.

⁵⁸ Jones, *Ducal Brittany*, p. 193. Westmorland was a farmer of the lordship itself as early as 1395.

⁵⁹ He was retained in 1370. Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 105; Anthony Goodman, *John of Gaunt: The Exercise of Princely Power in Fourteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York, 1992), p. 213.

of being one of Gaunt's two "bannerets," along with John, Lord Neville, and the two subsequently formed a close relationship, and in the fullness of time Lord Neville became his executor.⁶⁰ William himself went abroad in the duke's service at least five times, and always took an annuity of between £40 and £50.⁶¹ A Lancastrian servant of long standing, William Roos therefore followed his great patron, Henry, into conflict with the crown. Ralph Neville's younger brother Thomas, Lord Furnival, also rode with Bolingbroke from Doncaster in 1399. Like Lord Roos, he associated his fortunes with the duchy of Lancaster (though more by way of his elder brother), and eventually became a member of Henry IV's council, eventually serving as his treasurer after 1404.⁶² Perhaps only slightly less committed to Henry's cause was William, Lord Willoughby, who received the considerable sum of £600 for joining the rebels in 1399.⁶³ Willoughby was also an associate of the Nevilles of Raby, but harbored his own grievances with Richard II. Heir presumptive to numerous estates held by the Ufford earl of Suffolk. Willoughby's father was nonetheless denied them, in favor of the king's chancellor, Michael de la Pole, thereby depriving William of advancement in wealth and status.⁶⁴ In a similar vein, Ralph, Baron Greystoke, a significant landowner in the Northwest, joined Bolingbroke's army that summer at Doncaster for his own unique reasons.⁶⁵ A significant landowner in Cumberland and a real victim of the Scottish wars, he too had been at various times a retainer of John of Gaunt and the earl of Northumberland.⁶⁶ Yet Greystoke was among those who vociferously refused the king's request for money to help finance his second Irish expedition, and Anthony Tuck has suggested that this led to some fear of royal retribution on his part, perhaps providing

⁶⁰ Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, pp. 51, 62, 90 and 109; Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, pp. 288–89.

⁶¹ *CPR, 1377–1381*, p. 246; *CCR, 1377–1381*, p. 17; Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 280.

⁶² *Proceedings and Ordinances*, i, pp. 213–14 and 295.

⁶³ C. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397–1400* (Manchester, 1993), p. 252.

⁶⁴ The Suffolk estates were extensive. *Cal. Inq. Post Mortem, 1413–1418*, xx (1995), pp. 441–51.

⁶⁵ *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi Secundi*, George B. Stow, ed. (Pennsylvania, 1977) pp. 151–52.

⁶⁶ *Rotuli Scotiae in Turri Londinensi et in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi Asservati*, D. Macpherson et al., ed. (2 vols., London, 1814–19) ii, p. 62.

a unique incentive for him to join the rebels in 1399.⁶⁷ In any event, like all of his compatriots, Lord Greystoke also had prior ties to Lancaster and Percy that helped inform his opposition to Richard II's government.⁶⁸

Just as northerners were a conspicuous presence at Doncaster, so too were others conspicuously absent. Sir Ralph Eure was a tenant of the Percies, a soldier in two of John of Gaunt's campaigns, and a neighbor to the Nevilles in both North Yorkshire and Durham.⁶⁹ As a leading northern landowner himself, Eure might well have been expected to join Bolingbroke at Doncaster at the head of a significant force of his own, yet he did not—though neither does he seem to have joined the king's forces. Eure's father had previously served as steward of the royal household and loyalty to Richard's line—or perhaps simply to the royal dignity—may have run deep in his family. Alternatively, in his capacity as the bishop of Durham's palatine steward he may simply have been following the instructions and example of his lord bishop, Walter Skirlaw, formerly a keeper of Richard's privy seal, in keeping Durham loyal to the crown.⁷⁰ Durham was, after all, a conservative place, and its men were expected to remain loyal to the crown. The bishop of Durham's liberty was an eleventh-century creation meant to serve as an outpost of English—at the time, Norman—power in the far North.⁷¹ Yet Richard II's reign had brought rather specific challenges for the bishop; as the king himself held relatively little land north of the Trent, Durham was all the more critical in ensuring order and loyalty in the Northeast. The Scottish wars of the fourteenth century only served to emphasize that fact, especially in the years following the English defeat at Otterburn.⁷²

⁶⁷ PRO E 34/1/40/214; A. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (New York, 1974), p. 196.

⁶⁸ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, pp. 287–88 and 378.

⁶⁹ *House of Commons*, iii, pp. 38–43. I have also consulted *Members of Parliament for Northumberland, September 1327–September 1399* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1934).

⁷⁰ If so, this was loyalism of a fluid and changeable sort, which was as easily given by both to Henry IV after 1399.

⁷¹ C. M. Fraser, "Prerogative and the Bishops of Durham, 1267–1376," *English Historical Review*, 74 (1959), pp. 467–76.

⁷² Macdonald, *Border Bloodshed*, Chapter 4. An excellent study of border peace-keeping and the legal forms used therein is C. J. Neville, "Keeping the Peace in the Northern Marches in the Later Middle Ages," *English Historical Review*, 109 (1994), pp. 1–25. The role of Durham Priory in these matters can be found in R. B. Dobson, "The Church of Durham and the Scottish Borders, 1378–1388," Goodman and Tuck, eds., *War and Border Societies*, pp. 124–54.

It is therefore interesting that while both Skirlaw and Eure failed to side with Henry, neither was there any opposition to him from the palatinate of Durham—even from Lord Lumley, a prominent participant in the Epiphany Rising of 1400 but not a member of York's army in 1399.⁷³ The absence from York's levy of Durham's landed community may of course have been the product of neighborly influence, as many of northern lords sided with Bolingbroke.⁷⁴ Moreover, it is just possible that many rode with Henry under the banners of their betters, thus shielding them from the historical record. Yet many of these were men of real consequence and standing, and like Lord Lumley would likely have brought their own retinues to such an occasion. It seems that, in spite of Richard's cordial relationships with Skirlaw and Eure, the landed community of Durham failed to support him in his time of crisis. The absence of such evidence from the records of the Lancastrian usurpation is, of course, somewhat tenuous as evidence; we can confidently assert little more than that the political community of Durham remained ambiguous with respect to the events of 1399. Nonetheless, the following is reasonably clear: while many magnates, barons and knights of the North supported Henry Bolingbroke in 1399, many, probably including Ralph Eure, Walter Skirlaw and Ralph Lumley did not.⁷⁵ This certainly belies any description of the Northeast as "solidly Lancastrian" in 1399.

For the purposes of this essay, however, it is enough simply to identify and outline the northern character of Henry's rebellion, and that this northern character is reflected in the regional bias in his early government. Professor Storey once assured his readers that the essential political truth about the North was that it was far more influential than its population or economy warranted in the later Middle Ages, by virtue of its proximity to Scotland.⁷⁶ A northern

⁷³ None of their names appear in the relevant chronicles of the event. See, for example, *The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377–1421*, C. Given-Wilson, ed. (Oxford, 1997), pp. 52–53.

⁷⁴ On the other hand, the earl of Suffolk held considerable lands in Durham and was part of York's army. Yet Suffolk actually had little to do with Durham, and most of his estates were located south of the Trent; he was anyway very much a creature of the court. His partisanship—indeed, his entire political career—had little to do with regional politics: he was a royal partisan because he was close to the king and a household servant.

⁷⁵ Robert Conyers probably rode with Westmorland with his kinsman, John Conyers, the Claxtons of Haswell, Sir Robert Neville of Hornby, and William and Richard Gascoigne. All were attached to Westmorland's retinue by that date. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp. 252–53.

⁷⁶ Storey, "North of England," pp. 129–30.

baron himself and a witness to the failure of Richard II's northern policy, Henry IV understood the need for solid control of the region. For this he relied upon his neighbors, while also remaining a great patron to members of the northern gentry, of whom many were also tied to the earl of Westmorland. Some of their names—Gascoigne, Conyers, Claxton, and Grey—are familiar to students to the later fifteenth century, and particularly of the role of the Nevilles in its dramas. Others—Heron, Mitford, and Eure, for example—are less well known. All, however, played key roles in governance during Henry IV's early reign.

John Conyers and William Gascoigne were already important lawyers, commissioners and administrators in the Northeast by 1399, and both had benefited greatly from Lancastrian patronage. Of course, historians know William Gascoigne best in his legal capacity; a servant and trustee of Henry as earl of Derby, he would soon rise to become Henry IV's Chief Justice of the King's Bench.⁷⁷ Certainly, his family was not obscure; his brother, Richard, would also serve as a member of Henry's ducal council, and become both marshal of the royal Exchequer and steward of the northern parts of the duchy of Lancaster by 1400 under the new regime.⁷⁸ As befits a member of an ambitious political clan, the real underpinnings of William's rise were therefore the stuff of partisan politics and private service. Gascoigne was able to gain prominence in the 1390's not only through his holding of high judicial office in the duchy, but also by undertaking royal commissions, and he may well have brought his own retinue to Doncaster in 1399; the records seem to point to this.

An able Yorkshire esquire (from Gawthorpe), William Gascoigne first appears to us as an executor of the will of Sir Robert Swillington, long-time chamberlain of the duke of Lancaster's household.⁷⁹ His career of service to the duke and his considerable talents led to his great promotion within the duchy's administrative machine. He was one of several sergeants-at-law retained by Henry Bolingbroke in 1392, an indicator both of his own usefulness and the degree to

⁷⁷ Brown, "The Reign of Henry IV," pp. 16–17; Chris Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England 1360–1413* (New Haven, 1986), p. 287; Kirby, *Henry IV*, pp. 185–87, 239.

⁷⁸ *CPR, 1399–1401*, p. 202; *House of Commons*, iii, p. 161; Robert Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, vol. 1 (London, 1953), p. 418.

⁷⁹ Somerville, *History of the Duchy*, i, pp. 363–64.

which Gaunt was beginning to hand over his own retainers to his kinsmen for service.⁸⁰ Gascoigne's career in duchy service reached its peak, of course, when he was elevated to the chief stewardship of Lancashire (sometime before 1395) and became chief justice of Lancaster in February 1397.⁸¹

Following Gaunt's pattern of offering his retainers opportunities for service in his family's other households, Gascoigne at length attached himself to the Neville household, and became an important advisor and trustee to the earl of Westmorland. William seems to have been one of the architects of the so-called "Neville trust," a general descriptor for the series of conveyances used by Westmorland to disinherit the elder (Stafford) branch of his family, in favor of his cadet (Beaufort) branch. In 1397, following his marriage to John of Gaunt's newly legitimized daughter, Joan Beaufort, Ralph Neville set about the elaborate task of passing his patrimony along to her children by the use of jointure.⁸² Gascoigne came into Neville service sometime in the mid-1390's, and with his legal training and extensive experience probably assisted with the initial organization of the trust. Indeed, William himself later became one of the chief trustees of the Neville estates, receiving and resettling various estates on Ralph and Joan in jointure, with reversion of all properties to *their* heirs. Because this trust was a highly politicized set of legal maneuvers—and one of rather grand proportions besides—its success therefore required (and must have received) the crown's implicit blessing, to make up for its questionable legal stature. If the profligate nature of the earl's land conveyances that took place in the reign of Henry IV is any measure of such things, royal complicity was not hard won. Virtually the whole of Westmorland's extensive landed patrimony was passed along to his trustees between the late-1390's and the end of Henry IV's reign. This in effect disinherited the earl's elder branch, a faction now led by the first earl's grandson, the young Ralph Neville, second earl of Westmorland after 1425. This device—the conveyance to use in jointure, with reversion to a favored heir—was certainly common practice by the fourteenth century.⁸³ It in fact became a

⁸⁰ PRO DL 28/3/4.

⁸¹ Somerville, *History of the Duchy*, pp. 372 and 468.

⁸² See for example PRO D 690; *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 470.

⁸³ Chris Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1987), pp. 139–40.

more generally used Lancastrian instrument, with Gascoigne involved in other attempts to devolve estates to favored heirs.⁸⁴

Indeed, so many high-ranking royal officials and political insiders were involved in this scheme that it is quite difficult not to view its use in Westmorland's case as part of a conscious royal policy in the North. Because of the familial relationship between Henry IV and the Beauforts, their branch of the Neville family was quite naturally favored by the earl, and was also viewed as a potential Lancastrian asset in the North by the crown. From this perspective, the Neville patrimony must have been viewed as a necessary resource in augmenting royal, Lancastrian authority. In Henry IV's early years, with the stability of Lancastrian rule still very much in doubt and with royal power in the countryside still unsettled, William Gascoigne was an important player in the design and implementation of this ambitious Lancastrian scheme. The crown did its part by confirming Richard II's grants to the earl, but now specifically for "*his use and that of his wife and the heirs of their bodies.*"⁸⁵

And so, at the behest of his political masters, William Gascoigne managed the conveyance of dozens of estates "to use" over the next few years, often acting as trustee himself for some of the larger properties.⁸⁶ As the process of "Lancastrianizing" the Northern Province of the English Church matured, in the form of the translation of Henry Bowet to York in 1405 and especially Thomas Langley to Durham in 1406, the trust continued to prove useful and successful as an instrument of power. Durham lands, for example, were systematically transferred after 1406 to retainers of the first earl, and then back to him, his wife and their children.⁸⁷ Indeed, the bulk of the Neville patrimony—in Yorkshire, Durham, Westmorland and Cumberland—remained intact and in Joan Beaufort's hands long after the death of her husband in 1425. Indeed, at the time of her own death in 1440, she passed the bulk of these lands not to the second (Stafford) earl of Westmorland, but to Joan's eldest son Richard Neville, earl of Salisbury.⁸⁸ As a consolation, the second earl was granted the Durham lordships of Raby and Brancepeth, with all of

⁸⁴ PRO DL 27/126.

⁸⁵ CPR, 1396–1399, p. 267.

⁸⁶ CCR, 1396–1399, pp. 35, 96 and 244.

⁸⁷ See for example Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections, Church Commission (hereafter CC) 189602 and 189600.

⁸⁸ E. F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century, 1399–1485* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 319–23.

their appurtenances—by far the smaller share of the patrimony.

While William Gascoigne's grand project had achieved its desired end, his career contained other elements. In July 1403, he accompanied Westmorland, Ralph Eure, Sir Henry FitzHugh and others on an errand for the crown to raise arms in the Northeast against the earl of Northumberland.⁸⁹ As Henry was otherwise engaged, the scope of their commission soon became semi-permanent. After Shrewsbury, Westmorland, Gascoigne and John Conyers were named commissioners of *oyer et terminer* for the counties of Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland, charged with hearing cases of treason against some of the rebels.⁹⁰ With others, the three repeated their charge in 1405, negotiating with certain powerful and rebellious barons allied with the earl of Northumberland in the North, and arresting others.⁹¹ This reflects both the constant state of emergency in the North after Shrewsbury, and a certain talent for peacekeeping displayed there by the king's men.

In late April of 1405, just two months after the authorization and enrollment by Henry of a number of important Neville land transactions, Westmorland led a commission to reconcile the king with the remaining Percy followers in the North. Again with Eure, Gascoigne, the duke of York and the sheriffs of York and Northumberland, Westmorland led a joint commission of array for the four northerly counties, charged with deposing whatever remaining threat Henry Percy and his associates still posed there. In that same year, Gascoigne, Eure, Westmorland and others also served on a commission of *oyer et terminer* in the four counties, along with Richard Redman and Thomas Rokeby, the sheriff of York.⁹² It seems that the group was still assembled in April of 1408, when, with Robert Conyers of Durham, they met for negotiations with the remaining Percy sympathizers in Northumberland.⁹³ These appointments were probably *pro-forma*; the unsettled nature of the North seems to have left Neville and his men continually arrayed, ensconced in a heavily militarized region and enforcers of the royal will. Gascoigne remained at Westmorland's right hand for much of the time, lending weight to the endeavor by virtue of his office, and effective counsel

⁸⁹ CPR, 1401–1405, p. 294.

⁹⁰ CPR, 1401–1405, pp. 287 and 361.

⁹¹ CPR, 1405–1408, p. 75.

⁹² CPR, 1405–8, p. 432.

⁹³ CPR, 1405–1408, p. 405.

by virtue of his talent for administering affairs.⁹⁴ Gascoigne remained the realm's chief justice for the remainder of Henry's reign, excused from his post only after the coronation of Henry V.⁹⁵

A frequent companion of William Gascoigne in royal service, John Conyers was the kinsman of Robert Conyers of Durham, a significant palatine landowner who inherited the bulk of the family's patrimony around Sockburn, which was valued at something around seventy-five marks. For his part, John Conyers held only a few estates, worth just ten marks in total.⁹⁶ He therefore turned his attention to service and administration, and with considerable success. By the mid-1390's, he was a legal apprentice in London, and seems to have attached himself to the earl of Westmorland's retinue.⁹⁷ Here he will have come into contact with many members of the Lancastrian affinity, including Gascoigne. Upon completing his legal studies, Conyers returned to the North, and served on the array for the North Riding. In 1396, he entered the administration of the bishop of Durham, and was appointed steward of his North Yorkshire liberty of Allertonshire.⁹⁸ By the end of the 1390's, Conyers was also a consistent royal commissioner in the Northeast, and by virtue of his continuing connection to Westmorland and the Lancastrian party, we can be fairly confident of his and Robert's presence at Doncaster in 1399, probably in the earl of Westmorland's company.

Like many of Lancastrian persuasion, John Conyers' career was much aided by Henry IV's success. Following the events of 1399, he quickly gained higher employment, especially in the North Riding. After the coronation, he regularly served on commissions of array,⁹⁹ and became something of a fixture on the North Yorkshire bench for the better part of a decade.¹⁰⁰ In the aftermath of Shrewsbury, he was involved in the mopping up operation in the northern counties, and certainly by that point was a trusted member of Westmorland's inner circle.¹⁰¹ In 1405, he joined the earl, Gascoigne, Ralph Eure and others in a commission to round up the rebel associates of the

⁹⁴ *CPR, 1405–1408*, p. 359.

⁹⁵ K. B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), p. 123.

⁹⁶ PRO DURH 3/13, fos. 124rv, 125rv, 168rv and 168rv.

⁹⁷ *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 521.

⁹⁸ *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 284 and PRO DURH 3/33.

⁹⁹ *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 284.

¹⁰⁰ Walker, "Yorkshire Justices," p. 293.

¹⁰¹ *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 361.

earl of Northumberland.¹⁰² Along with William Gascoigne, who seems to have served as something of a mentor and patron to him, Conyers' brief was the administration of the king's justice and the extension of royal authority in the Northeast. His attachment to Westmorland's retinue gave him the advantage of working under the king's *de facto* regional governor, and their names often appear together in North Yorkshire service. Thus, as legal advisors and servants to both the Nevilles and the crown, and royal officers of stature in the Northeast, Conyers, like Gascoigne, played an important part in the solidification of Henry's rule.

Like John Conyers, the Claxtons likewise suffered from an "inconvenient" landed situation in the 1390s. With estates in Haswell and Claxton in South Durham, virtually all of the family's considerable holdings lay in the hands of the dowager, Isabel, from 1392 until her death in 1421.¹⁰³ In spite of this, the Claxton men forged notable political careers of their own. Isabel's younger son, Thomas, in a pattern so often seen in second sons, became attached to the Neville retinue. In 1385, he was described by the bishop of Durham's receiver as "[John] Lord Neville's receiver-general," a post which he would hold throughout his life, also serving Ralph Neville in that capacity.¹⁰⁴ By virtue of that position as the chief financial officer for Middleham and Raby, Claxton therefore wielded considerable influence in the Northeast.

Claxton was also personally active in the region's land market. Here, he worked diligently to improve his employer's financial fortunes, and from 1385 until his own death in 1402, he helped the Nevilles acquire and manage numerous estates in the North. Seemingly adept, like Gascoigne, at the application of legal devices such as the "conveyance to use" (employed by his family in the disposition of their own properties), he assisted Gascoigne with the implementation of the Neville Trust, and became a trustee of important Neville estates. Yet Claxton also worked to build a landed fortune of his own, and was thus active in the local land market on his own behalf. In 1388, his uncle, John Claxton, was named to a commission of array for the bishop's ward of Easington, along with the new Durham sheriff,

¹⁰² *CPR, 1405-1408*, p. 75.

¹⁰³ Her husband, William Claxton, died in 1392. Although some widows certainly managed to parlay their dower lands into political power, Isabel was not among them; she wielded relatively little political influence in her own right in the palatinate.

¹⁰⁴ *Bishop Hatfield's Survey*, pp. 267-69.

Sir William Bowes.¹⁰⁵ Perhaps not coincidentally, a few months later Thomas gained control of the considerable lands of Sir John Darcy, which included the manor of Herverton and a number of burgages in the bishop's boroughs of Durham and Sunderland—in Easington Ward. John Claxton had facilitated the grant of the Darcy lands to his nephew, who lorded over them in impressively high-handed fashion, repeatedly abusing the dignity of the young Darcy before finally marrying him off without the bishop's license.¹⁰⁶ In 1394, Thomas also gained the manor of Allenscheles and other estates in the palatinate from Margaret, the widow of Thomas Hunt.¹⁰⁷ Ralph Lord Neville then purchased these lands from him and granted them back to Claxton and others in his retinue. Indeed, the Nevilles frequently purchased lands from their retainers, often granting them directly back as an enfeoffment to use—a fact which encouraged them to be acquisitive when finances and responsibilities of office permitted. For his part, Thomas Claxton continued to acquire land right through the 1390's, and shortly before his own death in 1402, came into possession of the significant Durham lands of the late John Hedworth during the minority of his heir. These included estates in Southwick and Boldon, both of which were subsequently sold to Westmorland for a cash sum.¹⁰⁸

In fact, the earl of Westmorland eventually came to control all of Thomas Claxton's landed acquisitions, because the latter died leaving only a very young heir, who in due course became the earl's ward. In previous generations, the Claxton's employment of land conveyances might have averted such a guardianship, but in this case the potential guardian stood ready to seize the estates and was, of course, of sufficient standing to do so without much opposition. Thus, the Nevilles came into yet another source of landed income, by virtue of their political standing. None of this had any effect, of course, on the main family lands. The Claxton family patrimony around Haswell, Durham, remained in the hands of the dowager Isabel Claxton for some years, and no other talented family members appearing to follow Thomas into service at Raby and Middleham, Claxton influence

¹⁰⁵ PRO DURH 3/32.

¹⁰⁶ PRO DURH 3/32.

¹⁰⁷ The commission included Ralph, Lord Neville, Gilbert Elvet (one of his prominent Durham retainers), and Robert Coverham. *Catalogue of Ancient Deeds* (6 vols., HMSO, London, 1890–1915), i, p. 218.

¹⁰⁸ PRO DURH 3/33 and PRO DURH 3/13, fo. 130r.

in the North faded badly after 1402. Led by William Claxton, however, the family returned to prominence in the Northeast in Henry V's reign—again as members of the Neville affinity.

Another key figure in the establishment of Lancastrian government in the Northeast was Sir Thomas Grey of Heaton, a Northumbrian knight and soldier of some standing. Grey held numerous Northumbrian estates in the Northeast, all of them north of the River Tyne, in Northumberland. The bulk of these lay just upriver from Berwick, and Grey in fact made his principal residence at Heaton, near Wark Castle on the River Tweed, an important cog in the English defense structure along the Scottish Border. Although the Grey estates were nominally worth some £150, like many others in the march, their cash value had become suspect by the later fourteenth century. Sir Thomas' inquisition *post mortem* of 1400 confirms that repeated Scottish incursions had caused the value of his estates to plunge; at his death, they were worth perhaps just one-fourth of their nominal cash value.¹⁰⁹ Clearly, the occasionally overflowing hostilities along the march had taken their toll on the region's landed economy, felt even among significant members of the landed classes.

Perhaps seeking a political career as a remedy, Grey took to service more actively than ever in the last decade of his life. He was appointed steward of Durham by Bishop Skirlaw upon his elevation in 1388, an appointment that was probably rooted in their common previous experiences together as royal ambassadors to Scotland. Indeed, this was one of Skirlaw's first acts in Durham after the difficult episcopate of John Fordham; Grey was also made chief justice of the palatinate, and he held both positions from 1388–91.¹¹⁰ In 1389, Sir Thomas was also made justice of assize for Northamptonshire, the bishop's liberty in Northumberland, known also as North Durham, and was commissioned by the crown to mediate in the ongoing battle between the burgesses of Newcastle and the bishop of Durham over coal mining rights.¹¹¹ In 1391, he seems to have resigned the palatine stewardship in favor of accepting a number of royal commissions along the Border. As such, he became the bishop of Durham's steward, receiver and constable at Norham Castle.¹¹² In early 1397,

¹⁰⁹ PRO DURH 3/13, fo. 137v.

¹¹⁰ *House of Commons*, iii, p. 222; PRO DURH 3/33; CC 244251.

¹¹¹ *House of Commons*, iii, p. 224.

¹¹² PRO DURH 3/32.

the earl of Westmorland bought Wark Castle from Sir John Montague, and granted its custody to Sir Thomas.¹¹³ Sometime in 1398, the connection between the two families was further cemented when Thomas Grey the younger married the earl's daughter, Alice. Popular with the electors of Northumberland, the elder Thomas Grey served as their representative in the first 1397 Parliament, and again in Henry IV's first Parliament of 1399.¹¹⁴ In short, he was successfully able to exchange his Durham career for another in Northumberland, where he could be more actively involved in the defense of the march, and thus be of more value to the crown.

Did either of the Thomas Greys support Henry's usurpation? The chroniclers of the event omit any mention of him with the group joining Bolingbroke at Doncaster, and Grey was certainly not paid directly for any participation in the military procession through England thereafter.¹¹⁵ This is puzzling, because according to the chronicles he witnessed and participated in many of the events that followed, and became a trusted ally of Henry's almost right away, which strongly suggests a prior relationship. One explanation for his absence might be that while he was certainly a member of the Neville coterie, he was also a captain in the English army stationed on the Scottish border, and thus had already been retained for service in the East March. Because the overall command of this force was handed over to the earl of Northumberland in July of 1399 by the duke of Aumale in advance of his departure with the king for Ireland, it may have been that Sir Thomas rode to Doncaster with the earl of Westmorland.¹¹⁶ This might help to explain his invisibility in the records.

In spite of his service to various northern magnates, the elder Sir Thomas' eagerness to align himself with Westmorland also confirms something well-understood in the North by 1399, namely that the Nevilles and the house of Lancaster were growing closer, and serving one now amounted to serving the other. The treatment of Grey's brother-in-law, Thomas Mowbray, at the hands of Richard II also

¹¹³ *CPR, 1396–1399*, p. 73.

¹¹⁴ *House of Commons*, iii, p. 224.

¹¹⁵ *Historia Vitae*, pp. 152–53, certainly does not place him at the scene. The same chronicle places Baron Greystoke within Bolingbroke's contingent though his name is absent from the pay lists. Whether this pay list represents an exhaustive survey of the participants in 1399 is therefore an open question. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, Appendix 2.

¹¹⁶ PRO C 47/22/11/10; Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp. 163, 164–65 and 169.

provided Sir Thomas powerful motivation for guiltlessly associating himself with Henry's cause, both before and after the usurpation.¹¹⁷ As such, Henry made him a king's knight in 1399, and granted £100 per year at the exchequer, followed shortly by another royal grant of £100 worth of Northumbrian lands.¹¹⁸ Indeed, by the time of his death in 1400 the great bulk of Sir Thomas' income was derived not from his family patrimony in Northumberland, but from salaries, annuities, and royal grants. In one of the very few surviving Neville charters from the period, the earl of Westmorland formally retained his son-in-law, the younger Thomas Grey, in 1404, granting him custody of Wark Castle and the royal fortress of Bamburgh, which had long been in his care.¹¹⁹ What are we to make of the allegiances of the Grey family? Natural retainers of the Percies, their willingness to align themselves more closely with the relatively upstart Nevilles after 1397 seems to demonstrate a contemporary understanding that they were in the process of challenging the Percies or supremacy in the North.

Other prominent members of the northern gentry also managed to forge careers in the far North independent of any significant Percy ties, and some rose to become important Lancastrians under the direction of the Nevilles. Their careers are illustrative of the sea change underway in the political climate of the region by 1399. Although both held positions of great responsibility under Richard II, both Sir Gerard Heron and Sir Ralph Eure distinguished themselves greatly in the service of Henry IV.

The brother of William Heron, Lord Say (a retainer of the earl of Westmorland and member of the king's Privy Council after 1399), Gerard was an important landowner in Durham and Northumberland. On several occasions, he was returned as an M.P. by the electors of Northumberland, and became one of the most reliable commissioners in the Northeast.¹²⁰ By 1399, Gerard had carved out a successful career as an ambassador to the Scottish court, and he had held frequent royal commissions in Northumberland, one that certainly continued under the new king.¹²¹ In 1400, he was twice in Scotland

¹¹⁷ *House of Commons*, iii, pp. 223-24; Tuck, "The Percies," p. 190.

¹¹⁸ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 289; *House of Commons*, iii, p. 224.

¹¹⁹ Westmorland gained Bamburgh from the crown in 1403, when he replaced Percy in the East March. *CPR, 1401-1405*, p. 258.

¹²⁰ *House of Commons*, iii, p. 354.

¹²¹ *Foedera*, vii, pp. 650 and 675.

on diplomatic errands, presumably carrying news of Henry's newly signed peace with the French, and acting as an advance man for the English campaign.¹²² Heron was a close associate of Thomas Grey, in fact acting as one of his executors, while also mentoring his son in the affairs of the Anglo-Scottish border.¹²³ When the Percies revolted in 1403, Heron was named to a commission of array in Northumberland, and after fighting at the king's side at Shrewsbury he was commissioned to survey the Percy estates in Northumberland for escheat; thereafter, he served on various commissions of the peace in that county.¹²⁴ After a meeting of Lancastrian partisans at Durham, Heron assumed the difficult task of taking possession of Alnwick Castle, and faithfully administered Henry's oath of loyalty in Northumberland, serving also as a J.P. on numerous subsequent occasions.¹²⁵

But Gerard Heron was also active in Durham, the location of the bulk of his estates. He served as a councilor and frequent commissioner to the bishop and worked closely with other members of the Durham landed community. Yet his chief source of employment remained the Scottish Border. Constable of the bishop's castle at Norham for ten years, he purchased an estate nearby in 1389 and represented Northumberland in five Parliaments beginning in 1391. Like his friend and colleague, Sir John Mitford, Heron found Northumberland to be a more fertile ground for service, and he became extremely valuable to Henry IV as a diplomat, bureaucrat, and peacekeeper in the borders. His death in 1404 ended a distinguished and useful political career that spanned both sides of the political chasm of 1399.¹²⁶

However, by far the most successful politician of the period in the far northern counties was Sir Ralph Eure of Witton-le-Wear, Durham. Through his own inheritance and his fortuitous marriages, Eure came to control a good deal of family land in Durham, the North Riding, and Northumberland, with estates valued at well over £400.¹²⁷ He was also involved in a variety of commercial ventures in the region—earning perhaps £250 per year in the coal trade alone, for exam-

¹²² *Foedera*, viii, pp. 144 and 157.

¹²³ *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 182.

¹²⁴ *CPR, 1401–1405*, pp. 284 and 292.

¹²⁵ *Foedera*, viii, p. 321; *CPR, 1401–1405*, p. 296.

¹²⁶ *House of Commons*, iii, pp. 355–56.

¹²⁷ Arvanigian, "Landed Society," pp. 68–73.

ple¹²⁸—and drew significant income from a staggering array of offices and commissions. In many years, Eure may have earned as much as £1,000 of income from his commissions alone. Although he probably didn't participate in Bolingbroke's usurpation at an early stage, Henry nonetheless recognized him as an important figure in a sensitive region, and made him a king's knight in 1399.¹²⁹ From that date forward, Eure became one of the Northeast's staunchest Lancastrians, lending talent and energies to his commissions, offices, and projects of various sorts that followed. He served simultaneously as sheriff of Northumberland and York, and was returned as an M.P. for both counties on a number of occasions.¹³⁰ He served on three important commissions of array in the North between 1399 and 1401, and likely joined the king for some part of his Scottish campaign.¹³¹ As the steward of Durham, he retained oversight of the bishop's exchequer, which was among the largest of its kind in the country, clearing over £2,000 per year. His duties extended to organizing the array in Durham and presiding over the palatinate's chancery court, like the exchequer modeled on its royal counterpart.¹³² In all of these capacities, Eure proved more than able, reconciling the king's writ with that of the bishop, and at all times keeping the peace in the region.

Sir Ralph's service to the king continued apace right through the Percy revolts of 1403 and 1405. In his biography of Bishop Langley, R. L. Storey has argued that after his own installation at Durham in 1406, Bishop Langley would ideally have preferred to replace Eure as steward with one of his own Lancastrian retainers, but was simply unable to do so for local political reasons.¹³³ This seems unlikely, given that from the beginning of Henry's reign Eure had shown himself to be a loyal and competent servant to the bishop's benefactor, Henry IV. By 1406, Eure was a stalwart of the Lancastrian administration and a close associate and neighbor of the earl of Westmorland,

¹²⁸ Eure operated two significant coal-mining operations in Durham over twenty years, of which Evenwood was the largest and longest lived. CC 189809 and *Bishop Hatfield's Survey*, p. 266.

¹²⁹ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 288; *House of Commons*, iii, p. 38.

¹³⁰ *House of Commons*, iii, pp. 38–43.

¹³¹ *CPR, 1399–1401*, Appendix.

¹³² For the general structure and functions of these, see C. M. Fraser and K. Emsley, *The Courts of the County Palatine of Durham* (Newcastle, 1984).

¹³³ Storey, *Thomas Langley*, pp. 103–4.

assisting in the earl's management of the region. Given Bishop Langley's pragmatism, and his close relationship to the Nevilles and the crown, it is therefore unlikely that he or any Lancastrian would have wished for Eure's replacement in his capacity as steward.¹³⁴ In any event, Langley's appointment as bishop there was a relatively late Lancastrian installation in the Northeast. Eure and others had already secured the region after Shrewsbury and he and others were instrumental in scuttling Scrope's Rebellion in 1405, and dealing with the remaining rebels thereafter.¹³⁵ Whether Eure was a formal retainer of the earl of Westmorland or not, the two certainly acted in concert in all matters of consequence. Together, they and others effectively governed the North in Henry's early, uncertain days and continued to provide stability and continuity in the region as the new king found his political footing.

¹³⁴ Langley began his career as a clerk in John of Gaunt's household, and served as an executor of his will. Following the duke's death, Langley made the transition into Henry's household, where he rose to positions of great responsibility; he became keeper of the Privy Seal in 1401 and was Chancellor of England by 1405 (Kirby, *Henry IV*, p. 258). Having failed in his bid to make Langley first bishop of London then archbishop of York, Henry finally was able to secure the bishopric of Durham for him in 1406. Langley's talent for counsel and administration would make him one of the most powerful men in England by the latter part of the reign. See Storey, *Thomas Langley*, *passim*.

¹³⁵ Eure was among those employed by the king in the disposition of the prisoners after Humbleton Hill, when the crown came to loggerheads with the Percies over the matter of prisoners. His participation in this matter argues that he may not have been in Westmorland's retinue at the time, because its members were explicitly excluded from participation. *CPR, 1401-1405*, p. 213.

JOHN THE FEARLESS' WAY OF WAR

Kelly DeVries

Recently, medieval generals have been making a comeback among military history encyclopedists. After a long period of non-recognition,¹ in recent works, such as *The Reader's Companion to Military History*, *The Oxford Companion to Military History*, and *Reader's Guide to Military History*,² medieval generalship has received a resurgence of interest and a renaissance in credibility. Articles have been devoted to such notable medieval generals as William the Conqueror, Genghis Khan, Edward I, Edward III, Joan of Arc, Henry V, Richard the Lionheart, Saladin, Tamerlane, Sir John Hawkwood, and even the mostly legendary Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, better known as El Cid. For a medieval military historian, this is exciting news. After what has seemed like an interminable amount of time when we, and our predecessors, have been trying to call attention to the leadership capabilities of medieval generals—the phrase “pissing in the wind” comes to mind—others seem to be listening. But, given this new-found credibility, we, of course, want more.

Strangely missing from this list of generals are any of the four Valois Dukes of Burgundy. Ruling the duchy, and constantly expanding its borders, from 1363 to 1477, Dukes Philip the Bold (1363–1404), John the Fearless (1404–19), Philip the Good (1419–67) and Charles the Bold (1467–77) exhibited military leadership which duplicated or surpassed any of those generals listed above. They formulated an army (and a navy) which set standards for the late Middle Ages and became models for early modern France and Germany. They incorporated new methods of recruitment, funding, leadership, and supply;

¹ See, for example, the absence of an article covering any aspect of medieval military history in Williamson Murray, Macgregor Knox and Alvin Bernstein, ed., *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War* (Cambridge, 1994), or the cursorily and demeaning look at medieval military leadership in B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1991) and Michael Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford, 1976).

² Robert Cowley and Geoffrey Parker, ed., *The Reader's Companion to Military History* (Boston, 1996); Richard Holmes, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford, 2001); and Charles Messenger, ed., *Reader's Guide to Military History* (London, 2001).

and, perhaps earlier than any other military leaders, they integrated the newly evolving gunpowder weaponry technology into their military institution.³ Above all, when they encountered actual military conflict—campaigns, sieges, or battles—they profited from the experience: if they won, they built upon that victory; if they lost, they tended to learn from what they had or had not done so that they would not lose again. Of course, even all of this learning did not mean that they would always triumph. Eventually, the weakest of these four dukes, Charles the Bold, who had remained at the fore of his army for his entire ten-year reign, could not defeat all of the enemies who had massed against him, the Liégeois, Germans, Swiss, and French. He would die at the battle of Nancy on 5 January 1477.

But this is not his story. This paper wishes to discuss Charles' grandfather, John the Fearless. John's reign was not long. He would meet his end in an assassination, an assassination which he had provoked by his own attempts at political and military control over the kingdom of France, and by his own assassination of one of his chief opponents, Louis, duke of Orléans. But it was a reign which defined medieval military success. Although, historically overshadowed by his contemporary, King Henry V of England, it was John whose way of warfare won the greatest military prizes of the early fifteenth century: the prince-bishopric of Liège, northeastern France, and, especially, the Ile-de-France, including Paris.

Nevertheless, this story begins not with the later military success which he achieved, but with military defeat. John the Fearless was in command of forces which suffered one of the most disastrous defeats of the later Middle Ages when his army was defeated by the Ottoman Turks at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396. Only 23 years old at the time, John's command came not from any superior military experience or skill. Rather, as was common at the time with allied armies put together as a "crusading" force (which is perhaps the easiest way to describe the Western Christian Anglo-Burgundian-Franco-German-Teutonic Knight-Hungarian-Wallachian-Transylvanian contingent which fought against the Ottomans that day),⁴ John's

³ See Kelly DeVries and Robert D. Smith, *The Gunpowder Artillery of the Dukes of Burgundy* (forthcoming).

⁴ On the composition of the crusader army see Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London, 1934), pp. 33–49; Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), pp. 437–43; Hans Delbrück, *History of the Art of War*

noble rank placed him in charge. Of course, John was not alone in the decision-making leadership of this army. He was surrounded by other great and noble military leaders, in particular, the Franco-Burgundian generals, Philip of Artois, the Constable of France, Jean II le Meingre dit Boucicault, the Marshal of France, Jean de Vienne, the Admiral of France, Guillaume de la Trémoille, the Marshal of Burgundy, and Enguerrand de Coucy VII.⁵

Unfortunately, John listened to these leaders over others accustomed to fighting against the Ottoman Turks—none of the Franco-Burgundians had ever fought against this enemy before—especially the Hungarian king, Sigismund I. At Nicopolis, Sigismund recommended that his and the other central European troops, almost entirely infantry, should be in the vanguard, there to meet the irregular infantry of the Turks who stood in the van of their own army. The Christian infantry would take a defensive stance and try to provoke the Turks into a charge which would either be defeated at the contact of the two infantry forces or could be reinforced by the strong Franco-Burgundian cavalry ordered in the rear. This, John the Fearless ultimately refused to do.⁶ Philip of Artois used his influence and constabulary office with John the Fearless to counter the Hungarian king's proposal. According to contemporary Jean Froissart, he replied with these words:

Within the Framework of Political History, vol. III: *Medieval Warfare*, Trans. W. J. Renfroe, Jr. (Westport, 1984), pp. 437–39; R. Rosetti, "Notes on the Battle of Nicopolis (1396)," *Slavonic and East European Review* 15 (1936–37), 629–38; J. J. N. Palmer, *England, France and Christendom, 1377–99* (Chapel Hill, 1972), pp. 185–204; Henry L. Savage, "Enguerrand de Coucy VII and the Campaign of Nicopolis," *Speculum* 14 (1939), 423–42; Charles L. Tipton, "The English at Nicopolis," *Speculum* 37 (1962), 528–40; and Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Bold: The Formation of the Burgundian State* (London, 1962), pp. 59–78.

⁵ On the Franco-Burgundian leadership of the crusaders see Atiya, *Crusade*, pp. 438–40; Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, pp. 61–62; and Savage, pp. 423–42. Other notables in the crusader army include: the Count Palatine Ruprecht Pipan, Count Herman II of Cilly, Burgrave John III of Nuremberg, John Holand, earl of Huntingdon, John Beaufort, Philibert de Naillac, Grand Master of Rhodes, and Nicholas Kanizsay, archbishop of Gran. But none of these seem to have held much power in the tactical planning of the battle, and most may have stayed in the rear with Sigismund and the Hungarian, Wallachian, and Transylvanian troops.

⁶ Atiya, *Nicopolis*, pp. 82–84; Atiya, *Crusade*, p. 447; and Savage, pp. 434–35. This comes chiefly from Jean Froissart, *Chroniques*, in *Oeuvres de Froissart*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Brussels, 1867–77), XV:265–68.

Yes, yes, the king of Hungary wishes to gain all the honor of the day. He has given us the vanguard, and now he wishes to take it away, that he may have the first blow. Let those who will believe what he sends to us, but for my part I never will . . . In the name of God and Saint George, you shall see me this day prove myself a good knight.⁷

So John the Fearless followed the tactical traditions of at least a century of western military leaders:⁸ with a flurry of pride and enthusiasm the Franco-Burgundian cavalry rode head-long into their Turkish opponents, safely guarded behind a line of stakes. Initially, the horsemen were successful, breaking through the stakes and pushing the Turkish infantry back. A second attack by the Crusaders also achieved some success. But the Turks did not break into flight, and when the counter-attack came from the Ottoman regular troops, cavalry, infantry, and archers, the impetus of the Crusaders had been spent and, even though some Germans and Hungarians rushed to reinforce them, they were routed.⁹ Those who could, tried to flee from the defeat, but the Danube River blocked their path and few were actually able to leave the scene of what had become a slaughterhouse. Following the defeat, Franco-Burgundian soldiers who surrendered to their opponents were slain. Only after the capture of John the Fearless were prisoners accepted, and even then several hundred more Christian troops were summarily executed. A mere three hundred western European soldiers, from a total of perhaps as many as 6,000 who had been involved in the fighting, were eventually spared.¹⁰ Their ransom paid, an amount of more than 200,000 ducats, they returned home some nine months later.¹¹

⁷ Froissart, XV:268.

⁸ On this tradition see Kelly DeVries, *Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century: Discipline, Tactics, and Technology* (Woodbridge, 1996).

⁹ Atiya, *Nicopolis*, pp. 89–93; Delbrück, pp. 478–79; Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages* (London, 1905), II:351–52; and Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*, vol. I: *The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, 1976), pp. 352–55. Atiya (*Nicopolis*, pp. 92–93) maintains that there was a German and Hungarian reinforcement, even though Johannes Schiltberger (*Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger, a Native of Bavaria, in Europe, Asia, and Africa (1396–1427)*, ed. K. F. Neumann and trans. J. B. Telfer (London, 1879, p. 3) is the only contemporary author to contend that this took place. He was an eye-witness to the battle and may have been taken prisoner in this charge, and this convinces Atiya when *Le livre des fais du Mareschal de Bouquicaut (Le livre des fais du bon messire Jehan le Maingre, dit Bouquicaut, mareschal de France et gouverneur de Jennes)* (Paris, 1985, pp. 110–111) claims that the Hungarians fled without entering the conflict. Setton (pp. 354–55) agrees with Atiya.

¹⁰ Atiya, *Nicopolis*, pp. 94–97 and Setton, pp. 355–56.

¹¹ On the ransom for John of Fearless and other captives and how it was raised see Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, pp. 71–78.

Perhaps because of this defeat and the dishonor it brought to its leaders and participants, or perhaps because he did not reign as duke of Burgundy on his own until 1404, it was another decade before John the Fearless once again undertook military action. In 1407 war broke out on two of John's fronts. In France, civil war arose due to the French King, Charles VI's, mental illness which left an unstable government with a number of nobles vying for power. John the Fearless was one of the two most important of these nobles; the other was Louis, the duke of Orléans. The dukes of Burgundy and Orléans both were cousins to the king, which of course made them cousins to each other. But their family ties did not bring them to an accord, and for almost the rest of John the Fearless' reign, these two factions, typically known as the Burgundians and Armagnacs, utilized every means of warfare to fight against each other. Still, there had been little more than words between the two parties before 20 November 1407, when Louis of Orléans was cruelly assassinated in Paris. John the Fearless was quickly implicated, and the kingdom of France became divided between the two sides, the Burgundians, led by John, and the Armagnacs led at that time by Louis' son, Charles of Orléans, and his son-in-law, Bernard, the count of Armagnac.¹²

There seems little doubt among historians (or among contemporaries) that John the Fearless planned this assassination with the idea of taking advantage of the then weakened Armagnacs to extend his own lands and political power, although his initial claim was that it came about "through the intervention of the devil."¹³ Later, he paid a master in theology at the University of Paris, Jean Petit, to write a *Justification* for the murder, claiming that it was done only to put a stop to Louis of Orléans' "tyrannicide."¹⁴ Such maneuvers were able to convince or pacify some French nobles, but not all, and, as

¹² Edouard Perroy, *The Hundred Years War*, trans. W. B. Wells (Oxford, 1951), pp. 226–27; Richard Vaughan, *John the Fearless: The Growth of Burgundian Power* (London, 1966), pp. 43–48; Bertrand Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons: La maudite guerre* (Paris, 1988), pp. 67–76; and Bernard Guenée, *Un neutre, une société: L'assassinat du Duc d'Orléans, 23 novembre 1407* (Paris, 1992). [N. B. Vaughan's biography of John the Fearless is, no doubt, the finest in any language. In it, while not focusing on John's military career, Vaughan credits this duke of Burgundy with great military acumen. This article both confirms and extends Vaughan's research in this area.]

¹³ Perroy, p. 227; Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 46–48; and Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, pp. 78–83.

¹⁴ Perroy, pp. 228–29 and Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 68–74. Part of the *Justification* is translated in Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 70–72. The full document is quoted in Engerrand de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, ed. L. Douet-d'Arcq (Paris, 1857–62), I:177–242.

John must have known before premeditating his opponent's murder, the Burgundians ultimately were going to have to fight against the Armagnacs.¹⁵ But before they were able to do so, a second military front opened that forced John the Fearless to take military action outside French borders: the prince-bishopric of Liège.

At this point, this prince-episcopality had not yet come under direct control of the dukes of Burgundy (this would not happen until later in the century), but their influence there was significant. As such, the rebellion which eventually brought John the Fearless into the fray had been growing for several years. (Indeed, it could be said that the prince-bishopric of Liège had been one of the most rebellious of all medieval localities throughout the two centuries prior to Burgundian domination.)¹⁶ This particular rebellion began in 1390 when John of Bavaria, the seventeen-year-old brother-in-law of John the Fearless, was named prince-bishop of Liège. By 1394, the Liégeois had revolted against him, in the words of Richard Vaughan, "vigorous if rash attempts to establish and maintain his authority."¹⁷ This rebellion was initially quelled, but it resumed in 1402 and continued to grow in the ensuing years. Eventually, in August 1407, John of Bavaria was forced to call on his Burgundian relative who responded by mustering his army to come to the prince-bishop's aid.

John the Fearless may also have seen in the Liégeois conflict the means of establishing his own military skill in the face of growing tensions with the Armagnacs in France. For, there seems to be little doubt that he increased his knowledge about fighting wars while putting down the rebellion. The first thing he learned came not from a direct confrontation with the rebels, but from an engagement which occurred before John himself could become involved: the siege of Maastricht. Although most of the other towns of the prince-bishopric had joined the rebellion, Maastricht remained loyal and soon gave refuge to John of Bavaria. Thus, at the end of September 1407, the rebels besieged Maastricht.¹⁸ But this was a siege like none fought previously, as the rebels decided that they had neither the time nor

¹⁵ Perroy, pp. 229–30 and Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, pp. 93–97.

¹⁶ See Fernand Vercauteren, *Luttes sociales à Liège, XIII^e et XIV^e siècles*, 2nd ed. (Brussels, 1946), and Kelly DeVries, "Observations on the Rebellions of Southern Low Countries' Towns during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," (forthcoming).

¹⁷ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, p. 50.

¹⁸ The best account of this siege, which deserves a more complete treatment, is Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 52–54.

the soldiers to undertake a siege of any length and, anticipating the Burgundian reinforcements, the Maastrichters were not likely to surrender without putting up an enduring defense. So, after fighting a few skirmishes, the rebels turned to an attack tactic which had been evolving for close to a century, but one which had met only limited success on the battle- or siege-field: gunpowder artillery bombardment.

To that date, gunpowder weaponry had only been used sporadically against towns and castles, and always in conjunction with starvation and assaults as means to defeat the fortified locale; only one gunpowder artillery bombardment is credited with having breached a fortification prior to 1407, at Odrui in 1377.¹⁹ But, at Maastricht, the rebels did not use just a few guns, but many, perhaps their towns' entire arsenal. At this siege, from 24 November 1407, when the bombardment began, to 7 January 1408, when the siege was raised, Maastricht received 1514 large *bombard* balls, an average of thirty per day.²⁰ A further siege with yet a second bombardment followed in July, but it, too, was unsuccessful; and, by August 1408, John the Fearless was marching on Liège, the main rebel town, with his Burgundian army, forcing the rebels once again to raise the siege of Maastricht. But, as shall be seen below, John the Fearless had learned a valuable tactical lesson from the besiegers which would be into practice in the fight against his more powerful foes, the Armagnacs.

But first the Liège situation had to be dealt with. Negotiations between the rebels and John the Fearless, brokered by the French crown, halted activities until the middle of September, during which time the Burgundian forces grew larger and better armed. Finally, on 20 September, John broke from the negotiations and determined to fight the rebels. Three days later, he met this enemy in the battle of Othée.²¹ At this battle, John was not to repeat the mistakes of Nicopolis; at the same time, he could not count on his numbers or technological strength to carry him to victory. Instead, he had to

¹⁹ Froissart, *Chroniques*, VIII:248–50.

²⁰ Philippe Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, trans. Michael Jones (London, 1984), pp. 200–01.

²¹ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 51–66; Claude Gaier, *Art et organisation militaires dans la principauté de Liège et dans le comté de Looz au moyen âge* (Brussels, 1968), pp. 306–20; Claude Gaier, *Grandes batailles de l'histoire Liégeoise au moyen âge* (Liege, 1980), pp. 133–49; and Erich Wille, *Die Schlacht von Othée, 23 septembre 1408* (Berlin, 1908). The sources of this battle are most recently discussed in Hubert Carrier, "Si vera est fama: Le retentissement de la bataille d'Othée dans la culture historique au XV^e siècle," *Revue historique* 305 (2001), 639–70.

“out-general” his opposition, to defeat tactically the rebels. In his own words—via a letter which the duke sent to his brother, Anthony, he tells how this was accomplished:

When we had ridden forward about half a league, we saw them plainly . . . and they saw us. At this point my brother-in-law [John of Bavaria was also present] and I, together with our people, dismounted in a fairly advantageous position, thinking that they would come and attack us there. We placed all our troops in a single mass in order to resist more effectively with shock and charge which the Liégeois were likely to give us; and we formed two wings of bowmen and men-at-arms. Soon, they approached us to within about three bowshots, concentrating somewhat towards the right . . . There they stopped, drawn up in excellent order, and immediately opened fire on us with their cannons.

After we had waited a little and seen that they were not going to move, my brother-in-law and I, with the advice of the good captains and knights in our company, decided to advance in good order and attack the enemy where they were. [We also decided that], to break up their array and throw them into confusion, we should need 400 mounted men-at-arms and 1,000 stalwart infantrymen to strike at their rear, while we engaged them [in frontal assault] . . . One hour after midday we marched to attack [the enemy] in the name of God and of Our Lady, in handsome and excellent order, joining battle with them and attacking them in such a way that, with the grace and help of Our Lord, the day was ours.²²

With this victory, the rebellion ended.

John the Fearless’ tactics at Othée duplicated none of the disastrous tactics of Nicopolis. His patience in the 1408 engagement was obvious. He initially ordered his troops in a single massive infantry formation and prepared to defend against an attack. After an archery and artillery exchange, and after determining that his enemy was not going to rush foolishly onto the Burgundians, he consulted with his *good captains and knights* (note John’s emphasis). Then his army

²² This letter can be found in U. Plancher, *Histoire générale et particulière de Bourgogne* (Dijon, 1793–81), III:260, and *Régestes de la cité de Liège*, ed. E. Fäiron (Liège, 1933–40), III:no. 657. With only a few changes, I have followed the translation found in Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 60–62. Other contemporary sources attest to the veracity of John the Fearless’ account: Enguerran de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, ed. L. Douet-d’Arcq (Paris, 1857–62), I:365; *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denis*, ed. L. Bellaguet (Paris, 1839–52), IV:168, 170; 23; Jehan de Waurin, *Récueil des croniques et anciennes istories de la Grant Bretagne*, ed. W. and E. L. C. P. Hardy (London, 1864–91), I:119–20; and *Chants historiques et populaires du temps de Charles VII et de Louis XI*, ed. L. Roux de Lincy (Paris, 1857), p. 13.

marched in a "good order" towards the rebels, at the same time being assisted by a rear attack by horse and foot. In that same "good order," the Burgundians met the Liégeois and defeated them. There was no proud charge of disordered cavalry, as there had been at Nicopolis, only a strong, well-led advance. John the Fearless' leadership at Othée is particularly singled-out by contemporary Burgundian chronicler Enguerran de Monstrelet:

There is no need to expatiate on the bravery and coolness of the duke of Burgundy; nor to explain at length how, at the start of the battle, he moved on a small horse from one part of the army to another, exhorting and encouraging his men; and how he bore himself, until the end of the battle. In truth, his conduct was such that he was praised and honored by all the knights and others of his company; and although he was frequently hit by arrows and other missiles, he did not, on that day lose one drop of blood. When he was asked, after the defeat, if they ought to cease from killing the Liégeois, he replied that they should all die together, and that he had no wish for them to be taken and ransomed.²³

(Evidently, executing prisoners was another tactic learned from Nicopolis.)

Othée was the last battle John the Fearless would undertake, although large skirmishes were later fought by his forces at the bridge of Saint-Cloud, near Paris, on 9 November 1411, and at Saint-Rémy-du-Plain, on 10 May 1412. Nevertheless, as revealed in a rare extant plan of battle written by John the Fearless on 14 September 1417 and published by J. F. Verbruggen in 1959, this duke of Burgundy was prepared to do battle with his enemies any time such an engagement presented itself. This plan also establishes the defensive infantry tactics of Othée as John the Fearless' chosen means of fighting battles.²⁴

With the rebellion of Liège quelled, and with his tactical and strategic generalship affirmed, John the Fearless was ready to take on a larger target: Armagnac France. However, once again, the Burgundian duke had to contend with a rebellion before trying his military leadership skills against the Armagnacs. This time it was against one of

²³ Monstrelet, I:365. See also Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, p. 62.

²⁴ J. F. Verbruggen, "Un plan de bataille du duc de Bourgogne (14 septembre 1417) et la tactique de l'époque," *Revue internationale d'histoire militaire* 20 (1959), 443–51. See also Bertrand Schnerb, "La bataille rangée dans la tactique des armées Bourguignonnes au début du 15^e siècle: essai de synthèse," *Annales de Bourgogne* 61 (1989), 5–32.

his lesser nobles, Count Henri IV of Blamont, who seems to have counted on John's stay in the southern Low Countries to distract the duke from noticing that he had retained the strong fortress of Vellexon when directed to surrender it. But John the Fearless' stay in Liège was not long, nor did it distract him from Blamont's treason. In 1409, he ordered his leading general, Jehan III de Vergy, the Marshal of Burgundy, to capture Vellexon. John the Fearless had learned the lesson of Maastricht well: Vergy's siege train was filled with gunpowder artillery of all sizes—the largest *bombard* able to fire a stone weighing between 700 and 850 pounds, masons to make stone balls for ammunition, horsemen to transport the guns, carpenters to build mounts for the guns, and ropemakers, to bind the guns to their mounts. The bombardment of the fortifications began in September 1409 and lasted until 22 January 1410, when the fortress fell. As contemporary documents report, the artillery fire was relentless and destructive, but it could not breach the castle's walls. Nor did it cause the inhabitants of Vellexon to surrender. However, the bombardment did conceal the mining of the walls, and eventually this, together with the artillery-fire, breached the fortifications.²⁵

During both the engagements against Vellexon and against the Liégeois rebels, the Armagnacs had been busy working against John the Fearless and his adherents. Still, many French nobles and commoners continued to support the Burgundians, while the success of John's military endeavors also brought him much propaganda value; everybody loves a winner. So, despite the Armagnac blockade on John the Fearless' governmental power from 1407 to 1410, his popularity increased rather than decreased. Several even accepted the Burgundian leader's *Justification* for the assassination of Louis of Orléans, as penned by Jean Petit. Especially in Paris was the duke of Burgundy welcome.²⁶

²⁵ Contemporary documents of the siege of Vellexon can be found in Plancher, III:291–97, but see also Joseph Garnier, *L'artillerie des ducs de Bourgogne d'après les documents conservés aux archives de la Côte-d'Or* (Paris, 1895), pp. 17–30, and J. Bertin, *Le siège du château de Vellexon en 1409* (Vesoul, 1901), both of which also contain some documents. For secondary accounts of the siege see Bertin; Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 175–76; P. Camp, *Histoire d'Auxonne au moyen âge* (Dijon, 1961), pp. 23–26; and Pierre Bertin, "Le siège du château de Vellexon dans l'hiver 1409–1410," *Revue historique des armées* 27 (1971), 7–18.

²⁶ On this period of the Burgundian-Armagnac conflict see Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 67–87, among other sources listed in footnote 11 above.

In response to this popularity, in the summer of 1411 the Armagnac forces began to attack Burgundian locations, while Burgundian forces began to attack Armagnac locales. This was not difficult to do, especially in the region of Picardy, north of Paris. There a Burgundian town often stood only kilometers away from an Armagnac town. So, it was that within a few days John the Fearless had acquired the Armagnac town of Saint-Quentin, on the Somme River, but, at the same time, he lost Ham, further up the Somme River. This would not do, not for someone who recently had become used to crushing his opposition, not trading equal blows. Therefore, while under the pretense of seeking for a truce, he gathered his army and his artillery train and advanced against the Armagnac holdings in the disputed region. By the end of August, the duke had both besieged Rougemont with, among other gunpowder artillery, "the great bombard of Burgundy," and achieved a rapid victory in the reconquest of Ham.²⁷ According to *Le livre des trahisons de France envers la maison de Bourgogne*, at the latter siege three shots were fired from the bombard known as the *Griette*, a gunpowder weapon which had been made earlier that year in Saint Omer and tested in the presence of the duke himself.²⁸ The first passed over the town's castle and fell into the Somme; the second hit the ground in front of the castle, but still had enough power that it began to destroy a tower and two adjacent walls; and the third shot, which also struck the ground, made a breach in the wall itself. Before a fourth shot could be fired, the town capitulated.²⁹ While Enguerran de Monstrelet claims that the town fell by gunfire from several sources, especially from the numerous *ribaudequins* on each of which were mounted at least two medium-sized *veuglaires* which "fired night and day against the town [and] which greatly tormented their adversaries."³⁰ Other Armagnac towns soon followed suit, Péronne, Nesle, and Roye all falling to the duke before 22 September. Only at Montdidier did John the Fearless

²⁷ Monstrelet, II:172–75; *Chronique des Pays-Bas, de France, d'Angleterre et de Tournai*, in *Corpus chronicorum Flandriae*, 3, ed. J. J. de Smet (Brussels, 1856), p. 342; and Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, p. 111.

²⁸ M. G. A. Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France and Burgundy at the End of the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), p. 141.

²⁹ *Le livre des trahisons de France envers la maison de Bourgogne*, in *Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de la Belgique sous la domination des ducs de Bourgogne (textes Français)*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Brussels, 1873), p. 96.

³⁰ Monstrelet, II:172–75 (quote is on p. 175).

meet substantial opposition; when anticipated reinforcements failed to appear, the duke withdrew first to his more secure northern lands and later to Paris for the winter.

1412 found John the Fearless at the height of his French popularity. However, this did nothing to quell his opponents' enthusiasm to fight against the Burgundian duke. Thus John decided to strike directly at one of the strongest power-base of the Armagnacs: the town of Bourges. Bourges was not only the capital of the province of Berry but also the home of one of the most influential Armagnac leaders in France, Jean, the duke of Berry. Jean de Berry, in his eighties at the time, was not a prominent military leader, but his economic and political acumen was recognized by all Armagnacs, and evidently by John the Fearless as well. John's plan was to attack Bourges in an attempt either to capture it, thereby depriving Jean de Berry of his primary financial source, or to cause enough destruction to demoralize the duke and his colleagues. The town was also quite far into the kingdom of France, a good distance from Burgundian territory. An attack of Bourges, especially with a heavy gunpowder artillery bombardment, would show the Armagnacs that John the Fearless could reach and cause damage to any of their lands or towns. On 11 June, again with the bombard *Griette* in tow, the duke of Burgundy laid siege to Bourges. A monk of Saint Denis was an eyewitness to the bombardment at Dun-sur-Auron, a suburb of the town, and left this account:

[The besiegers] . . . caused a cannon called *Griette*, which was bigger than the others, to be mounted opposite the main gate. It shot stones of enormous weight at the cost of large quantities of gunpowder and much hard and dangerous work on the part of its expert crew. Nearly twenty men were required to handle it. When it was fired the thunderous noise could be heard four miles away, and terrorized the local inhabitants as if it were some reverberation from hell. On the first day, the foundations of one of the towers were partly demolished by a direct hit. On the next day this cannon fired twelve stones, two of which penetrated the tower, thus exposing many of the buildings and their inhabitants. At the same time, other batteries at the siege were also making breaches in other parts of the wall.³¹

³¹ Religieux de Saint-Denis, IV:652. See also Monstrelet, II:273–74, 281–82; Vaughan, *John of Fearless*, pp. 95–96; Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, p. 112; and Garnier, pp. 14–15.

The defenders of Bourges fought back, using their own gunpowder weapons and providing one of history's earliest gunpowder artillery duels; death and destruction was significant on both sides.³² However, Bourges did not fall. On 22 August 1412, at Auxerre, a peace between both parties was signed. One of the provisions of this peace treaty was the granting of a pardon for the assassination of Louis of Orléans to John the Fearless and any others not directly responsible for the actual murder.³³

Seemingly, John the Fearless had won the war between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs. However, Hundred Years War peace treaties were notoriously brittle, and the Treaty of Auxerre's provisions were not heeded for long. Throughout the remainder of 1412 and all of 1413, Armagnac factions worked to undermine John the Fearless' victories, while a popular rebellion in Paris—known as the Cabochien revolt—fell out against the duke.³⁴ Ultimately, the Burgundian leader was even forced to flee from Paris before the end of summer 1413, surrendering it to Armagnac control.³⁵

The military impetus now turned to the Armagnac forces which in May 1414 began taking the war against Burgundian territory. Richard Vaughan has suggested that this was done “with an aim of crushing John and conquering or confiscating his territories.”³⁶ But such a conclusion seems to ignore the fact that the Armagnacs did not have the military might, nor the desire, to occupy all of the Burgundian-controlled towns of Picardy, let alone capturing Burgundy, Artois, and the Low Countries. Moreover, the targets of the Armagnac campaign, Compiègne, Soissons, Bapaume, and Arras, the capital of Artois, seemed to display a wiser strategy: to nibble away at more vulnerable Burgundian sites. Compiègne, Soissons, and Bapaume all fell quite rapidly.³⁷ But the previously uncontested Arras did not. Although not previously attacked, the inhabitants of Arras had not been idle in their military preparations. Enguerran de Monstrelet writes:

³² Monstrelet, II:281–82, and Guillebert de Lannoy, *Oeuvres*, ed. C. Potvin (Leuven, 1878), p. 19.

³³ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 96–98.

³⁴ See Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 98–102; A. Coville, *Les cabochiens et l'ordonnance de 1413* (Paris, 1888); and Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, pp. 127–43.

³⁵ On 23 August 1413.

³⁶ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, p. 197.

³⁷ Religieux de Saint-Denis, V:293; Monstrelet, II:466, III:6–7; Jean le Fevre, *Chronique*, ed. F. Morand (Paris, 1876), I:160–63; and Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, pp. 149–51.

The people of Arras, who were daily expecting to be besieged by all the power of the king, made great preparations to resist them and to defend themselves against their adversaries. They endeavored to make *boulevards* before their gates, of large oaks planted in the earth . . . and also barriers and ditches in many and diverse places, so that no one would be able to approach them. In these *boulevards*, on the towers and walls, and put all around their town, they placed more large cannons, *veuglaires*, and other instruments of war to torment their enemy.³⁸

Thus, when the Armagnacs began their siege, they encountered strong defenses and a determined populous. Again, an artillery duel ensued. Despite, “firing their bombards, cannons, *veuglaires*, and *colleuvres*, which were discharged incessantly day and night,” according to the anonymous author of *Le livre des trahisons de France envers la maison de Bourgogne*, their own numerous gunpowder weapons and siege machines were useless, and their mines were continually and effectively countermined.³⁹ In the meantime, the Armagnac army outside the walls of Arras was also beset by dysentery.⁴⁰

In order to end the siege and perhaps to allow him time to regroup and reinforce his military forces, John the Fearless resorted to diplomacy, asking his brother-in-law, the duke of Brabant, and his sister, the countess of Holland and Hainault, to negotiate another peace treaty. This treaty, the Peace of Arras, was almost the exact opposite of the one signed at Auxerre the year previously. It decidedly condemned the duke of Burgundy for all of his actions in France since 1407, including the murder of the Duke of Orléans, and commanded him to make territorial, financial, and spiritual reparations.⁴¹

It would be folly to think that John the Fearless ever intended to keep this treaty; as mentioned, such was the status of peace treaties and negotiations during the Hundred Years War, more to stop current fighting rather than prevent future warfare. However, it was events happening outside of the Burgundian-Armagnac conflict—principally the 1415 landing of King Henry V of England in Normandy, his

³⁸ Monstrelet, III:22.

³⁹ *Le livre des trahisons de France envers la maison de Bourgogne*, p. 127; Monstrelet, III:22–31; Religieux de Saint-Denis, V:370–75; Jean le Fevre, I:184; Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 197–98; Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, pp. 151–52; and A. d'Héricourt, *Les sièges d'Arras* (Arras, 1844).

⁴⁰ Monstrelet, III:29–30. See also *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris, 1405–49*, ed. A. Teutey (Paris, 1881), p. 56.

⁴¹ See Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 198–203, and J. Finot, *La paix d'Arras, 1414–15* (Nancy, 1906).

successful siege of Harfleur, and his even more successful battle at Agincourt—which effected what occurred next.⁴² John the Fearless was not present among the French forces at Agincourt, although he seems to have intended to be, putting away his animosity for the Armagnac military leaders who were also in attendance. Nor was he immediately able to take advantage of the defeat and death of his opponents there. Although many of his supporters styled these as Armagnac defeats,⁴³ the English threat for the moment seems to have superceded French politics. The Armagnacs stayed in power, even after the leading Armagnac leader, the dauphin, Louis of Guienne, died in December 1416 (his replacement was the very capable Count Bernard of Armagnac).⁴⁴

It was only in 1417, with the return of Henry V and the beginning of his successful conquest of Normandy, that John the Fearless was once again able to make military inroads against his Armagnac enemies. Because he had not regained his leadership status since Agincourt, the Burgundian duke had sought an alliance with Henry V. Following a secret meeting with the English king at Calais on 11–16 October 1416, a pact was solidified, which, at the very least, seems to have given John foreknowledge of the 1417 English invasion.⁴⁵ With this intelligence, John the Fearless was able to coordinate his campaign against Armagnac holdings in Picardy and the Ile-de-France with Henry's against Normandy. His first target was Montdidier, the town which had held out against him so often before; it fell in June. In July, he captured Nogent-sur-Seine and Troyes; in August, Doullens, Amiens, Rheims, and Beauvais; in September, Beaumont-sur-Oise, Senlis, Pontoise, Vernon, Mantes, Provins, and Poissy; and in October, Montlhéry and Chartres. (This list does not mention the large number of castles and non-urban fortifications which also fell to the duke during this period.) Most of these sites were either intimidated into surrender—John would show up outside the town walls with his large gunpowder artillery train in tow and threaten death and destruction if the inhabitants did not surrender—

⁴² There are numerous accounts of these events, but few connect them with what was happening in the French Civil War, despite the obvious military relationship.

⁴³ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 207–08.

⁴⁴ Charles of Orléans had been captured at Agincourt.

⁴⁵ See *Chronique des cordeliers*, in Enguerran de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, ed. L. Douet-d'Arcq, vol. 6 (Paris, 1857–62), p. 235; *Gesta Henrici quinti*, ed. B. Williams (London, 1850), pp. 103–04; and Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 213–15.

or bombarded into submission. Those locations which did try to defend themselves could hold out for little more than a few days.⁴⁶

John the Fearless' strategy in 1417 was simple: he sought to encircle Paris with Burgundian acquisitions in order to make a coordinated attack upon the capital city. Since John's ouster in 1413, the Parisians had been split on whether to give their allegiance to the Burgundians or to the Armagnacs. Before Agincourt, when the dauphin, Louis of Guienne, or one of his Armagnac military leaders, Charles of Orléans, Louis of Anjou, or Bernard of Armagnac, had been present in the city, the inhabitants had favored their side, but when not present, and especially after Agincourt, their commitment to the Burgundians had increased. During 1416–17, several small Parisian rebellions had even tried to force the city to accept John the Fearless' rule. These had always been harshly quelled by the Armagnacs. But when Burgundian soldiers—so numerous that, Monstrelet claimed, the Parisians thought their large number of tents “was a good sized city”⁴⁷—stood outside of the city's walls from late in 1417 into early 1418, firing their cannons and other gunpowder weapons against these walls and into the city, the intensity of these rebellions increased. During one of them the chief Armagnac leader, Count Bernard of Armagnac, was even murdered. Finally, on 29 May 1418, the citizens of Paris, being attacked from without and within, opened their town's gates to John the Fearless' troops.⁴⁸ A massacre of Armagnac supporters ensued, with more than two thousand killed, and the insane King Charles VI and his queen, Isabeau of Bavaria (at the time she was being held by and was favorable to the Burgundians) welcomed John the Fearless as the governor and “protector” of France.

In the year following the capture of Paris, John the Fearless tried to put together a governing coalition of Burgundians and Armagnacs. In a treaty signed in early September 1418, he even made sure that the last remaining son of Charles VI and Isabeau, the dauphin, Charles, received the lands of Dauphiné, Touraine, Berry, and Poitou as an appanage, and he continued to recognize him as heir to the French throne. He also allowed Charles, the now *de facto* Armagnac leader,

⁴⁶ Monstrelet, III:218–91; *Chronique des cordeliers*, pp. 243–44; and Fevre, I:320–24.

⁴⁷ Monstrelet, III:216.

⁴⁸ Religieux de Saint-Denis, VI:85, 127–29; Monstrelet, III:216; Jean Juvenal des Ursins, *Histoire de Charles VI*, in *Nouvelle collection des mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*, 2, ed. M. Michaud (Paris, 1857), pp. 537–38; Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 221–27; and Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, pp. 180–93.

to name one of three officials who would handle the state's finances. In addition, John seems to have been interested in halting any further English advance into France and, perhaps, to regain some of those lands already lost to them. However, John was never able to carry out this plan, for on 19 September 1419, in meeting with the dauphin on the bridge at Montereau under a writ of "safe passage," he was set upon and murdered by Armagnac adherents.⁴⁹

It could be said that John the Fearless "lived by the assassin's sword and died by the assassin's sword." But in characterizing this very important ruler of the later middle ages by these two scandals, his generalship is minimized. John's prestige as a military leader grew from the disaster of Nicopolis to the victory of Paris. His military career was not always one of success, and yet, ultimately, his strategy and tactics would prove his generalship. He learned how to fight battles in a way that was decidedly not original, but was nonetheless effective. And he learned to fight sieges, perhaps being the first general systematically to use a large gunpowder artillery train either to bombard or intimidate an enemy fortification into surrender. Finally, he learned to fight campaigns, encircling a major target with minor acquisitions so that its capture became an event of inevitability in which the inhabitants played more of a role in the defeat than did any military offensives. The assassinations which marked John the Fearless' career can never be removed from his biography, but a recognition of his military leadership role and expertise is needed to complete that story.

⁴⁹ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 263–86; Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, pp. 194–207; and Paul Bonenfant, *Du meurtre de Montereau au traité de Troyes* (Brussels, 1958), pp. 1–16.

WOMEN AS BOOK COLLECTORS AND DISSEMINATORS OF CULTURE IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND BURGUNDY*

Sharon Michalove

Piecing together the pattern of upper-class women's education in late medieval and early modern England is no easy task. The sources are varied and scattered, leading the researcher to make inferences rather than statements of fact. Interpretation becomes a vital function of the research. These difficulties in finding source material, in interpreting the life of the relatively many upper-class women from the stories of the few, and of defining what is meant by education are familiar to those whom I have followed in this venture. First, the number of elite women as a percentage of the general population is, by definition, small. The number that appear in records such as wills, inquisitions post mortem, court records, household accounts and so forth is smaller still and the detail is scanty. Isolating the few women about whom substantial information is available makes for a very small sample. Women like Margaret Beaufort, Cicely Neville, Anne Boleyn, and Margaret of Anjou had prominent court positions. The ladies of the Paston, Stonor, and Lisle letters are known to us from happy accidents of history that meant a few large family letter collections from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were preserved. Through much of the period discussed in this paper few personal letters exist outside the Paston, Plumpton, Stonor, and Cely collections. Diaries are unknown until the later sixteenth century. In the meantime, historians have debated whether these women were exemplars of upper-class women generally or were anomalies, who should be disregarded. I support the first view. Book ownership, and

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in particular, patronage of manuscript and print book production is one way of uncovering women's education.

While I agree with Susan Groag Bell in her pivotal article on female book ownership that women were empowered by their possession of books, which allowed them to use books as an educational tool,¹ women with power and influence also used books as a way of manifesting that power. In the major examples that I will look at in depth later in the paper, Margaret of York emulated the Burgundian ducal family she married into by becoming a connoisseur and collector of fine manuscripts. In addition, she commissioned both manuscripts and printed books to give to important religious foundations and to individuals. This patronage, both of the producers of these books and manuscripts and of their recipients, was one way in which she reinforced her power and influence in Burgundy. While we do not have as much evidence about Margaret of Anjou, she may also have used manuscript ownership and patronage as way of displaying her influence in the English court—a court in which her husband was very assiduous in providing educational patronage. However, women's education, including literacy and patronage, were contentious issues in the late Middle Ages.

Our place is usurped by pet dogs, or by hunting hawks, or by that two-legged animal with whom clerics were long since forbidden to live together, and whom we have always taught our pupils to shun even more than a snake or a cockatrice. For that reason she has always been jealous of any devotion to us: she cannot be placated. Eventually, when she spies us languishing undefended (except by some dead spider's web) in a corner, she begins to scowl, abusing us and scorning us in malignant language. She points out that we are the only items in the household that are unnecessary; she complains that we serve no domestic purpose whatever; and she advises that we should quickly be exchanged for expensive hats, fine silk fabrics and deep-dyed scarlets, frocks and fancy furs, wool and linen. And with good reason, if she could see what lies within our hearts, if she had attended our private deliberations, if she had read the book of Theophrastus or Valerius, or if she had only listened with comprehending ears to the twenty-fifth chapter of Ecclesiasticus.²

¹ Susan Groag Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture," in Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski, *Women & Power in the Middle Ages* (Athen: The University of Georgia Press, 1988), 149.

² Richard de Bury, *Philobiblon* (1344–45), in Alcuin Blamires, *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended: An Anthology of Medieval Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 1.

The fourteenth-century author, Richard de Bury, may have written of books imagining themselves as shunned by women, but many women were interested in books and were patrons of authors, copyists, illuminators, and printers. In an age when most aristocratic education took place at home rather than in a formal school setting and documentation is scarce, we can only speculate on the processes by which upper-class women were educated. However, the patronage of writers, teachers, schools, and scholars is one possible way to assess women's interest in education.

Women's book collections in the fifteenth century tend to be heavily weighted in favor of religious texts. However, there are examples of collectors whose books ranged in subject from history, to romance to didactic literature and poetry as well as Books of Hours and religious treatises.³ Libraries, especially those in the Low Countries, arguably where the major bibliophiles resided, usually consisted of the following categories of books: a bible, a psalter, a book of an evangelist with some epistles, sermons, pious treatises, breviaries, songs, poems in the courtly tradition as well as popular poetry, law books, books of medical recipes and other practical advice (such as demonstrated by the *Menagier de Paris*), books about horses and hunting, and vernacular literature.⁴

Margaret of Anjou's surviving books are a book of romances given to her as a wedding present by the Duke of Suffolk, several Books of Hours, a psalter, and *Le Temple de Boccace*, which she commissioned from Georges Chastellain. If she had books by her father, René d'Anjou, they have not survived. But, having been brought up in the Angevin court, she might have had a taste for romances as suggested by Suffolk's gift. Margaret of York was known for her collection of religious books and her commissioning of religious books as gifts, but she also had *The Flowers of History*, a Justinian, and a life of Alexander, which indicates that not all of her reading was

³ Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books: Ideals and Reality in the Life and Library of a Medieval Prince* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1997), 12, 28n. Among their examples are Gabrielle de la Tour, Countess of Montpensier, whose inventory included 175 books on a variety of subjects and Marguerite de Boncourt, Dame de Santes, who left 22 books in her will, of which only one is a devotional text.

⁴ Bernard Bousmanne, Frédérique Johan et Céline van Hoorebeek, eds., *La Librairie des ducs de Bourgogne: Manuscrits conservés à la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Volume II: Textes didactiques* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 20–21.

devotional. Although her books are described as typical of a noblewoman of the period, "Cela s'explique par ses propres goûts, mais aussi en partie parce qu'il s'agit d'une bibliothèque typiquement féminine de cette époque, contenant de nombreux textes devotionnels, théologiques et didactico-moralisateurs et, en revance, peu de textes historiques et pratiques",⁵ she also had access to the extensive libraries of the rest of her circle.

Women were notable patrons of the arts throughout the middle ages and in the early modern period. June Hall McCash sees a number of reasons why women would become patrons. First, their patronage functioned as commemoration of the dead, usually of a husband, but sometimes of parents. Anne Neville, for example, probably commissioned the *Beauchamp Pageant* in commemoration of her father Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. Second, women's patronage could become an expression of political power. A third impetus was the glorification of family. Anne Neville's example also functions in this way. Fourth, religion could be a powerful motivator of patronage. The desire for knowledge was a fifth reason. The sixth reason, the need for women to provide educational material for their children, was an incentive to dispense patronage. Finally, patronage was a means of providing entertainment for the patron, her family, and her retainers. One example would be the patronage of an author who provided a romance that could be read aloud to the household. Another example would be the patronage of minstrels, players, mystery and passion plays, musicians, and other entertainers and forms of entertainment. As McCash sums up, "Throughout the Middle Ages women were active patrons engaging in a great variety of cultural activities, often at the forefront of literary and artistic developments."⁶

The interconnection among the aristocratic women who patronized authors is important in understanding the networks of patronage that existed. This patronage could bring the reputation and display of wealth that indicated power and influence, which was so desirable to the aristocracy in the fifteenth century, by both men and women. The Bohun family is well-known for the extent of female patronage. Joan FitzAlan, the wife of Humphrey Bohun, earl of

⁵ *La Librairie des Ducs de Bourgogne*, 28.

⁶ June Hall McCash, "The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women: An Overview," in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 33.

Hereford, Essex, and Northampton, was the daughter of Richard FitzAlan, earl of Arundel and his wife Eleanor. Humphrey was a bibliophile and he seems to have encouraged his wife to take an interest in books. Thomas Hoccleve dedicated "The Complaint of the Virgin" to her, a translation of a poem from *Pèlerinage de l'âme* by Deguileville. She may have been the owner of the Symeon manuscript, now in the British Library, a compilation of verse and prose that is religious and moralistic.⁷ Her cousin, Blanche of Lancaster, first wife of John of Gaunt, may have been another patron of Froissart, the patron for Chaucer's poem *La Priere Nostre Dame*, adapted from Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de la vie humain*, an ABC poem that Blanche may have used to teach her five children.⁸

Joan's two daughters, Eleanor and Mary Bohun, were also noted patrons. Mary was the first wife of Henry Bolingbroke, later Henry IV. She is known to have been the owner of a French *Lancelot* and several psalters. Her daughter Philippa married the Danish King Erik and took with her a psalter that had a miniature of Mary. Eleanor is especially known for having commissioned the Edinburgh psalter that is now in the National Library of Scotland. At her death in 1399, her daughter Isabel, a nun, received some religious books including a French bible, a book of the decretals in French, and a book of the lives of the fathers. Her daughter Joanna received a psalter and other devotional books. Eleanor's daughter Anne received *The Golden Legend* in French.⁹ Anne, who was countess of Stafford and later countess of Buckingham, patronized John Lydgate's *Invocation to St. Anne*. Anne was the only heir of her father, Thomas of Woodstock, as well as of her mother Eleanor's estates, and those of her grandmother Joan. Carole Rawcliffe, in her study of the Stafford family, characterized Anne Stafford as "a serious and well-educated woman."¹⁰ Lydgate dedicated the *Legend of St. Margaret* to Anne's daughter Anne, wife of Edmund Mortimer, earl of March.¹¹

⁷ Karen K. Jambeck, "Patterns of Literary Patronage: England, 1200–ca. 1475," in *Cultural Patronage*, ed. McCall, 236–37.

⁸ Jambeck, "Patterns of Literary Patronage," 235.

⁹ Jambeck, "Patterns of Literary Patronage," 237.

¹⁰ Carole Rawcliffe, *The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham, 1394–1521* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 95.

¹¹ Carol Meale, "... alle the boke that I haue of latyn, englich, and frensch": Laywomen and Their Books in Late Medieval England," in Carol Meale, ed., *Women & Literature in Britain 1150–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 137.

and books led to the growth in the use of the vernacular in literature over Latin. Of the nonservice books owned, the devotional and didactic books were usually in English, while the romances were frequently in French. Although historians generally accept that most women did not know Latin (Bishop Fisher mentions that Margaret Beaufort regretted not being taught Latin as part of her education), Alice West refers in her will to "alle the boke that I haue of latyn, englich, and frensch,"¹⁴ so generalizations may be misleading about the education of aristocratic women.

Women were patrons of publishers as well. Of those patronized, the best known were Caxton and Wykyn de Worde, who combined the professions of printing, publishing, writing, and translating. Margaret, duchess of Burgundy, was not the only well-known patroness of Caxton. *The Book of the Knight of the Tower* was a fourteenth-century manual describing, through various stories and homilies, proper female behavior that Geoffrey la Tour Landry, a French nobleman, wrote for the instruction of his own daughters. In his English translation of this treatise, Caxton says of another of his patronesses, that the

boke is comen to my handes by the request & desyre of a noble lady which hath brouȝt forth many noble & fayr douȝters which ben veruouſly nourisshed & lerned/ And for very ziele & loue that she hath alway had to her fayr children & yet hath for to haue more knoueleche in vertue to thende þt they may alwey perseuere in þe same hath desired & required me to translate & reduce this said book out of frenssh in to our vulgar englishe/ to thende that it may the better be vnderstonde of al such as shal rede or here it/ wherfor atte contemplacion of her good grace after the lytel connyng that god hath sent me/ I haue endeuyryd me to obeye her noble desyre & request especial for ladyes & gentilsymen douȝters to lordes & gentilmen/ For whiche book al the gentilwymen now lyuyng & hereafter to come or shal be arn bounde to gyue laude praysyng & thanynges to the auctor of this book & also to the lady that caused me to translate it . . .¹⁵

Nicholas Orme has speculated that this noble patroness might have been Queen Elizabeth Woodville, wife of Edward IV.¹⁶

¹⁴ Frederick J. Furnivall, *The Fifty Earliest English Wills in the Court of Probate, London. A.D. 1387-1439; with a Priest's of 1454* (Bungay: Early English Text Society, 1882; reprinted Oxford University Press, 1964), 5.

¹⁵ William Caxton, *The Book of the Knight of the Tower*, ed. M. Y. Offord (London: Oxford University Press for the Early English Text Society, 1971), 3.

¹⁶ Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: The Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy 1066-1530* (London: Methuen, 1984), 108.

A very interesting example of testamentary bequests can be seen in the will of Anne Harling. The only child of Sir Robert Harling, knight, and Anne Gonville, heiress, Anne Harling of East Harling, Norfolk, was a benefactress to her community through generous bequests to various churches and she was also very interested in education. She had been the ward of Sir John Fastolf, and was married first to Sir William Chamberlain, then to Sir Robert Wingfield, and finally to Lord Scrope of Bolton.¹⁷ Well educated, with wealth and influence, Anne Harling was literate and learned, and was noted for her piety. She had her own books and could read in English and French. She owned and managed manors and estates in various parts of England, wielded political influence, made bequests to institutions that promoted education, and supported both teachers and students.¹⁸

Anne Harling's will includes gifts such as "To my lady my lorde moder, myn embrowdered Sawter." Perhaps more interesting is her gift to her godson, the Duke of Suffolk. Among other bequests, Anne gave him "a Premier whiche kynge Edward gauffe me." The importance of the gift to the duke might be the connection with the previous owner. Edward IV may have given her the book because of her pious reputation and her interest in books. Anne Harling had other books that she considered valuable and mentioned in her will. Her nephew Edward received "a Frenche boke." Dame Jane Blakeney received "my white booke of Prayers." Her god-daughter Anne Fitzwater received "a Premier clasped wt silver and gylte, for a remembrance, to pray for me."¹⁹

A less exalted lady, Dame Margery Salvin of York, wife of Sir John Salvin, left her brother Richard Danby her "boke of Bocas" at her death in 1496.²⁰ Books were considered valuable commodities—worth giving and receiving, and well worth protection. In February 1503, the privy purse accounts for Elizabeth of York record a payment to William Trende of 18 shillings to reimburse him "for money by him layed out for the making of a chest and almorys in the Quenes Counsaile Chambre for to put in the bokes."²¹

¹⁷ Gail McMurray Gibson, *The Theater of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 96.

¹⁸ Gibson, *Theater of Devotion*, 96–106.

¹⁹ *Testamenta Eboracensia: A Selection of Wills from the Registry at York IV* (Durham: Andrews and Co., 1869), 152.

²⁰ *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, 116.

²¹ Nicholas Harris Nicolas, ed., *Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York: Wardrobe Accounts of Edward IV* (London: William Pickering, 1830), 96.

Whether the testator or the legatees could read the books is not really important. They were doubtless part of a community in which some members could read. In addition, these books could become an aide-de-mémoire in the daily practice of religion. Eric Acheson, in his study of the Leicestershire gentry in the fifteenth century, points out that a book received as a bequest might not have had much value for its new owner.²² While this may be true, the book certainly had some importance to the testator. Religious books could serve a commemorative function, reminding the recipient of the giver each time it was used.²³ These books may therefore be one small measure of an interest in education in its broadest sense.

Looking at women book owners is a fruitful way of measuring an interest in literate culture. Anne Beauchamp, the wife of Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, gave her *Book of Hours*, an elaborately illustrated work said to have been commissioned for her by her father, to her daughter, Anne, the wife of Richard III. Edward IV willed several books to his wife, Elizabeth Woodville, including St. Augustine's *City of God*. She also owned *The Romance of the Holy Grail*, and the *Morte d'Arthur*. Margaret of Anjou, the wife of Henry VI, read Boccaccio and owned romances about Alexander the Great, Charlemagne, Ogier the Dane, and Guy of Warwick. Her book collection also included *Le Livre de Fais Dames et de Chevalries* by Christine de Pizan and *Le Ordre de Gartier*.²⁴

Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran found in her study of education in Yorkshire that women's wills were more likely to include books in the bequests than were men's wills.²⁵ This may be because women were more likely to own moveables than land. While the mere ownership of books does not prove that these ladies could read—they could, after all, have had a servant or relative read to them—it does show that they were interested in and participated in literate society. While many other examples besides the ones that I have already mentioned above could be chosen to illustrate women book owners' links among patronage, literacy, and political and cultural influence, I will concentrate on two—Margaret of Anjou and Margaret of York.

²² Eric Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c. 1422–c. 1485* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 187.

²³ Meale, "all the bokes," 130.

²⁴ Darlene Tempelton, *Woman in Yorkist England* (Mecque: Ide House, 1983), 16.

²⁵ J. Moran, *Growth of English Schooling 1340–1548: Learning, Literacy, and Laicization in Pre-Reformation York Diocese* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 152.

Margaret of Anjou, the daughter of René, duke of Anjou, was born at Pont-à-Mousson on the 23 or 24 of March 1429 or 1430. She married Henry VI, king of England at Tichfield on the 22 of April 1445, crowned at Westminster on the 30 of May, in the same year. She died at Dampierre on the 25 of August 1482.

Second daughter and fourth child of René of Anjou and his wife, Isabelle of Lorraine, Margaret was born in 1429 in Lorraine into a world of conflict. Her father, loyal to the Valois kings of France, spent much of his life imprisoned by the duke of Burgundy. His wife, Isabelle, recruited armies and continued resistance against the claims of Burgundy. Margaret was sent to live first with her maternal grandmother, Margaret of Lorraine, and later with her paternal grandmother, Yolande of Aragon, who was acting as regent in Anjou for Louis III of Sicily, her eldest son.²⁶ Yolande, patron of the university of Angers, was very well educated. In her long residency with her grandmother, Margaret was probably given a good education in managing a household as well as a grounding in literary matters.²⁷ Margaret was surrounded by examples of strong females, ruling in the absence of men. She was well-schooled in the subjects of war, administration, and politics.

Margaret's father, René, was interested in art and literature and was a collector of manuscripts, painting, tapestries, and other *objets*. He was also a patron of artists, commissioning many works.²⁸ Margaret can only be identified as the owner of a few books. One is a wedding gift from John Talbot that included romances, genealogies, the *Chroniques de Normandie*, Chartier's *Breviaire de Noblesse*, Christine de Pizan's *Livre des Fais d'Armes et de Chevalerie*, Bouvet's *Arbre des Batailles*, and the statutes of the Order of the Garter. She also owned John Lydgate's *Poems* and his *Life of Our Lady*. In her last years, when she had returned to France, Margaret commissioned *Le Temple de Boccace* from Chastellain.²⁹

Margaret's education may have influenced her future as queen of England. In 1445, she was married to Henry VI, the ruler of the

²⁶ J. J. Bagley, *Margaret of Anjou, Queen of England* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1948), 23–26.

²⁷ Diana Dunn, "Margaret of Anjou, Queen Consort of Henry VI: A Reassessment of Her Role, 1445–53," in *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Rowena E. Archer (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), 112–13.

²⁸ Diana Dunn, "Margaret of Anjou," 113.

²⁹ Dunn, "Margaret of Anjou," 113–14. According to the records at the Institut de Recherche d'Histoire et du Textes, her surviving books with notes from the codicology department at the IRHT are listed in the Appendix.

hereditary enemies of her family. At the age of 16, Margaret moved from the uncertainties of the court of Anjou to the maelstrom of political intrigue that characterized the court of the English monarch. She spent her early days in England making a progress from Southampton to London, entertained by various members of the nobility. This was a chance for her to learn about her most important subjects.³⁰ In addition, the duke of Suffolk, who had accompanied her from France, was able to educate her about the factions and rivalries of the English court. Suffolk, however, was as much a partisan as the rest of the nobility, and the lessons that Margaret learned from him were to skew her perceptions of the court and to make her adopt his enemies as her own. Since she was not, like her husband, willing to stand above the conflicts, the crown became more and more entangled in factional politics, leading in the end to the deposition of Henry VI and the assumption of the throne by Edward IV, son of Margaret's enemy, Richard, duke of York.

Margaret was recruited as a diplomat early in her marriage. Charles VII prevailed upon her to try to convince Henry to surrender Maine to Anjou, which would have been congenial to her. Whether or not her entreaties were the reason, Henry agreed to return Maine to Charles VII and Margaret's father René in April 1446. He said that he was doing it in part as a favor to the queen,³¹ "our most dear and well-beloved companion the queen, who has requested us to do this many times."³² The surrender of Maine was not accomplished so easily, since Henry's ministers did not agree with the policy and wished to negotiate better terms with France. However, it is an early indication of Margaret's ability to influence her husband.

Margaret relied on a coterie of advisors to educate her about English politics. Besides Suffolk, her councilors included the duke of Somerset, Thomas Lord Scales, and her husband's friend and confidant, Viscount Beaumont. Both William and Lawrence Booth, her early chancellors, were to become archbishop of York later in their careers.³³

Margaret spent a great deal of her time busying herself with household affairs, estate management, hunting, and so on. She was actively involved in the dispensation of royal patronage. Ralph Griffiths says

³⁰ Bagley, *Margaret of Anjou*, 41–47.

³¹ Bagley, *Margaret of Anjou*, 49.

³² Quoted in Ralph A. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI: The Exercise of Royal Authority 1422–1461* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 255.

³³ Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI*, 262.

of her, “as a patron she showed herself to be resourceful and persistent, to the point where she was prepared to compete with others—even the king—for a benefice, an office, or a lucrative marriage.”³⁴ Bagley suggests that she was driven by her enthusiasms, rather than by cautious consideration of issues. In some cases this brought great benefits, as with the establishment of Queen’s College, Cambridge. Margaret obtained the license necessary from the king, collected donations from Henry, the duke of Suffolk, Cardinal Beaufort, and the duke of York, among others, and allowed her arms to be used as the college arms.³⁵ Her petition to the king read,

the fondacion and determinacion of the seid collage to be called and named the Quenes collage of sainte Margerete and saint Bernard, . . . so that beside the mooste noble and glorieus collage roial of our Lady and saint Nicholas founded by your highnesse may be founded and stablissed the seid so called Quenes collage to conservacion of oure feith and augmentacion of pure clergie . . . and to laud and honneure of sexe femenine . . .³⁶

Unfortunately, not all of Margaret’s enthusiasms were so benign. Her fierce partisanship, first favoring her friend and mentor the duke of Suffolk and later her defence of the rights of her young son, was eventually to acerbate tensions among the nobility to the point of civil war. Margaret’s book collection, with its many historical tomes as well as the gift from Talbot that includes the statutes of the Order of the Garter illustrate the not only the significance of book ownership but also the connectivity between books and politics in the fifteenth century. Another example of a woman whose political influence was a major factor in both English and continental affairs in the late fifteenth century was Margaret of York, duchess of Burgundy.

Daughter of Richard, duke of York and Cicely Neville, sister of kings Edward IV and Richard III, and the wife of Charles, duke of Burgundy, Margaret was one of the most politically influential women of her day. As duchess of Burgundy, Margaret was involved in the marriage negotiations for her stepdaughter Mary, the heiress of the Burgundian lands, and as dowager duchess, she was integral to the negotiation of the Anglo-Burgundian alliance of 1480, and perhaps most importantly, in supporting the Yorkist pretenders to the English

³⁴ Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI*, 258.

³⁵ Bagley, *Margaret of Anjou*, 57.

³⁶ Quoted in Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI*, 257.

throne, Lambert Simnel and especially Perkin Warbeck, after the accession of Henry VII in 1485.

Born in 1446, Margaret was the fifth child and third daughter of Richard Plantagenet and Cicely Neville. Learning from the example of her pious and politically astute mother, Margaret was respected at the court of Burgundy for her attention to administration and politics.³⁷ In addition, devout religious practice was very important to Margaret, another trait passed on from her mother. As a child, she would have been given lives of the saints to read, especially those of Catherine of Siena and Bridget of Sweden. Regular hours were set aside for prayer, contemplation, and fasting, and gifts of vestments, books, reliquaries, and plate would have been given to local churches in the various places that she lived. The proper observance of the feasts of the church would have been an integral part of Margaret's everyday life.³⁸ She was a noted patron of the nuns at Boneffe who wanted to take over the chapel of the Holy Cross at Malines as well as of the church of St. Rombout's at Malines.³⁹ She donated windows to churches at Malines, Dendermonde, Alost and Bruges and she was interested in relics, shown by her attendance at the opening of the tomb of St. Rombout and her involvement in the question of ownership of the relics of the abbey of Lobbe, which was a matter of dispute between the canons of St. Ursmer's at Binche and the clergy of St. Lambert's in Liège.⁴⁰

In her biography of Margaret, Christine Weightman speculates that Margaret would have been educated with her younger brothers, George and Richard. Her signature, similar to that of Richard, may indicate that she was proficient in writing. She may have had some background in church and legal Latin, but Weightman indicates that she commonly read from French translations of Latin authors. Her nurse, Anne of Caux, would have taught her to speak French and her reading ability in French was excellent.⁴¹ One of her main extravagances was in the procurement of manuscripts. This interest may have been developed at the court when Elizabeth Woodville

³⁷ Christine Weightman, *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy 1446–1503* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 23.

³⁸ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 24.

³⁹ Margaret established the dowager's court at Malines, one of the cities acquired as part of her dower, after Charles the Bold's death in 1477; see Muriel Hughes, "Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy: Diplomat, Patroness, Bibliophile, and Benefactress," *The Private Library* 7 (1984): 9.

⁴⁰ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 201–03.

⁴¹ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 24.

patronized her or it may be that Margaret became a bibliophile after her arrival at the Burgundian court. Her mother, Cecily Neville, collected primarily religious works and her father, Richard, duke of York, was known only for his patronage of Osbern Bokenham for a translation of Claudian's *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, which seemed to mirror his own political situation.⁴² Looking at York family book ownership,

Richard, Duke of York, four books; Cecily, Duchess of York, seven English devotional works, 39 service books, a total of 46. Of their children who survived into the reign of Edward IV, nothing is known for George of Clarence or Elizabeth of Suffolk. Edward IV had at least 40 books, not including any service books. His queen, Elizabeth Woodville, can be associated with six texts including the London poem celebrating Barnet and Edward IV's return which was dedicated to her. Of their children, Edward, Prince of Wales, can be linked with two books and one poem, a total of three; Elizabeth of York as princess and then queen can be associated with about eight texts. To return to the older generation, Anne of Exeter owned two books that survive, and possibly received the dedication of another. Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, is in a class by herself: she both commissioned and gave away many books. Twenty-eight can be associated with her, of which 22 survive. Richard III can be linked to twelve volumes (18 texts), including two dedications. His queen can only be allotted one text in which her name occurs with his.⁴³

Her great-uncle, Edward, duke of York, had translated the Comte de Foix's book, known in English as *The Master of Game*. Margaret far surpassed any family interest in books and commissioned and collected magnificent illuminated manuscripts, such as *The Visions of Tondal*.⁴⁴

At the age of 21, Margaret went to court as a protégé of the new queen, Elizabeth Woodville. She would have learned court etiquette and more about dancing. Elizabeth was also involved in promoting Margaret's marriage, first to Don Pedro of Aragon, then after his sudden death in 1466, as the third wife of Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy.⁴⁵ This marriage, apart from its political implications, was to

⁴² Joel T. Rosenthal, "Aristocratic Cultural Patronage 1350–1500: Social Institution and Personal Bond," *Journal of Medieval History* 10 (1984), 350.

⁴³ Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs have surveyed the books of the Yorkist royal family in "Choosing a Book in Late Fifteenth-Century England and Burgundy," in *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), 62–63.

⁴⁴ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 24–25.

⁴⁵ Muriel Hughes, "Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy: Diplomat, Patroness, Bibliophile, and Benefactress," *The Private Library* 7 (1984), 3. Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 28–29.

have an important effect on Margaret's cultural education. Not only was the court etiquette in Burgundy among the most elaborate in Europe, and the collections of jewels, plate, tapestries, and paintings truly magnificent, but the private libraries were outstanding, especially the collection of Louis Gruuthuyse, a close friend of both Margaret and of her stepdaughter and future duchess, Mary. After Gruuthuyse's death, his library was purchased by Louis XII and became the core of the French royal library.⁴⁶ Gruuthuyse's influence on Margaret was to encourage her bibliophilic tendencies. In addition, she would have become part of a bibliophilic culture that included her mother-in-law Isabel of Portugal and her husband's half-brothers, especially the Grand Bastard Anthony, who was a notable book collector.⁴⁷

Margaret's education would have continued with the festivities that attended the marriage. In Bruges, pageants and *tableaux vivants* were performed that represented famous couples from the bible such as Adam and Eve, Esther and Ahasuerus, and Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, as well as famous couples from history and mythology, such as Antony and Cleopatra. Nine days of tournaments, elaborate banquets, and processions marked the marriage festivities.⁴⁸ John Paston III wrote to his mother Margaret,

Many pagentys wer played in hyr wey in Bryggys to hyr welcomyng,
the best that ever I syc. . . .

And as for the Dwkys coort, as of lords, ladys and getylwomen, knyts,
sqwyers, and gentylmen, I hert never of non lyk to it, save Kyng
Artourys cort.⁴⁹

At the court in Ghent, Margaret would have been instructed by her mother-in-law, Isabel of Portugal, who was known as being active politically and administratively in the government of her late husband, Philip the Good. Isabel was also a noted patron of literature, art, and religion. Margaret inherited her secretary, the Portuguese scholar Vasco de Lucena, at Isabel's death in 1471.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 94.

⁴⁷ For information on Anthony and his book collection, see A. Boinet, "Un Bibliophile du XV^e Siècle. Le Grand Batard de Bourgogne," *Bibliothèque de L'Ecole des Chartes* (Paris: Librairie D'Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1906), 255–269.

⁴⁸ Wim Blockmans, "The Devotion of a Lonely Duchess," in *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion, and The Visions of Tondal*, ed. Thomas Kren (Malibu: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1992), 29–30.

⁴⁹ James Gardner, ed., *The Paston Letters IV* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1986), 298.

⁵⁰ Hughes, "Margaret of York," 8. de Lucena translated several religious texts for Margaret. See Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, "Choosing a Book," 68; 75.

Edward IV's exile in at the Burgundian court in 1469–70 meant that Burgundian courtliness became the English model as well, and Caxton, who had been a business advisor to Margaret, went on to become the first and most influential printer in England, as well as an author, translator, and publisher, through the offices of his patron, Anthony, Lord Rivers, brother-in-law to the king.⁵¹ When Margaret visited London in 1480, she stayed at Rivers' estate in Kent while visiting the shrine of Thomas Becket. Weightman assumes that during her visit Margaret would have seen a copy of Rivers' translation of the *Dictes and Saying of the Philosophers*, which was one of the first books printed by Rivers' protégé, Caxton, after his return to England.⁵²

Margaret supported formal male education, leaving a scholarship in her will at the University of Louvain. She also supported her chaplain, Robert Camell, during his studies and she paid for the education of a poor child in Ghent by the brothers of St. Jerome.⁵³ From 1478, she also supported a five-year-old boy in Binche, paying a priest for his board and education. She also paid an additional sum for his clothing and provided a surgeon when the boy broke his leg. Margaret also arranged in the same year for Jeanne, the orphaned daughter of the count of St. Pol to reside at the convent of St. Agnes in Ghent. Reformed prostitutes in Mons were given an asylum in two of Margaret's nunneries from 1485, which was to provide them with an education.⁵⁴ In addition, the assumption can be made that female education within the court would have taken place. She was probably responsible for the education of Charles' 11-year-old daughter Mary by his second wife, Isabel of Bourbon. Certainly she made the arrangements for Mary's wedding to Maximilian of Austria. When Mary died in 1482, Margaret was given charge of her son Philip's education.⁵⁵

According to the card catalog in the Codicology Department at the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire de Texte, Margaret owned at least 31 books, giving her one of the largest collection of books owned by a female in the period.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 94.

⁵² Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 137.

⁵³ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 203.

⁵⁴ Blockmans, "The Devotion of a Lonely Duchess," 35.

⁵⁵ Hughes, "Margaret of York," 7.

⁵⁶ Her surviving books with notations from the codicology department at the IRHT are listed in the appendix to this article.

In addition, she had access to the library of her father-in-law, Philip the Good, who had one of the most extensive collections of books in Europe. Although many of Margaret's books came to her as gifts while duchess of Burgundy, the fact that books were considered suitable presents indicates that Margaret was known for her interest in learning. Her stepdaughter, Mary of Burgundy, gave her a copy of *Les Chroniques de Flandre* in 1477, after Margaret was widowed. Margaret also gave books as gifts to friends, and to churches and convents, including the *Vie de St. Colette* to the convent of the Poor Clares in Ghent,⁵⁷ the *Des Faiz du Grant Alexandre*, and *La dialogue de la Duchesse de Bourgogne*, which she gave to Jeanne de Hallewijn.⁵⁸ However, her patronage of Caxton was the most important element in her promotion of learning. She sponsored the production of the first book printed in English, *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, and she encouraged Caxton to seek the patronage of her family when he returned to England in 1476. Rather than take the traditional widow's role of seclusion in a convent, or choosing a second marriage with an inferior, she remained at the center of life at the Burgundian court, exerting influence as an advisor, mediator, and diplomat. At her death in 1503, she was remembered for her work on behalf of the church and for her wisdom in dispensing church patronage to the learned and worthy rather than to the highest bidder or to the most importunate nobles.⁵⁹

As Aline Taylor points out in her recent biography of Isabel of Portugal, who was Margaret of York's mother-in-law as well as one of her mentors and teachers, books were vital elements in the political education of the elite. Isabel, traveling to Brussels to visit her son Charles, count of Charolais and future duke of Burgundy, in the summer of 1461, carried with her what Taylor terms "perhaps the most important items,"⁶⁰ books of Greek and Roman history that would provide examples of great leadership. Classical authors were prized for their portrayals of great heroes, villains, military descriptions, and above all codes that mirrored those of the chivalric tradition. These classical models were the foundation of education and book collections were treasure troves of classical ideals.

⁵⁷ Blockmans, "The Devotion of a Lonely Duchess," 37.

⁵⁸ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 204–08.

⁵⁹ Weightman, *Margaret of York*, 212–17.

⁶⁰ Aline Taylor, *Isabel of Burgundy: The Duchess Who Played Politics in the Age of Joan of Arc, 1397–1471* (New York: Madison Books, 2002), 169.

Margaret of York, duchess of Burgundy, chose to act publicly in ways that were not prescribed for women in late fifteenth-century Europe. Theoretically women were to take a passive role, especially in public affairs.⁶¹ However, Margaret learned well from the examples of her teachers—her mother Cicely Neville, her sister-in-law Queen Elizabeth Woodville, and her mother-in-law Isabel of Portugal. Their combination of practical experience and literary appreciation, as shown by their book ownership, provided the knowledge necessary to act as councillors and in some cases as sole decisionmakers. None of these exemplars shrank from pursuing an active political role, both in collaboration with their husbands and on their own once they became widows. Their book ownership truly did make them disseminators of culture that could be used for political ends. In her career as duchess of Burgundy and then as dowager, Margaret could model her own politically active career on those of these other extraordinary women.

*Appendix: Surviving Books of Margaret of Anjou, Margaret of York,
and Isabel of Portugal*

A comparison of several prominent women book owners is very instructive, especially in terms of what has survived and how these survivals color our views of book ownership. While Isabel of Portugal was noted for her interest in books, the number of books that can confidently be ascribed as belonging to her is very small. By contrast, Margaret of York's collection is much larger and richer. Both had access to various other libraries including the extensive ducal library. It is possible that Isabel's books were subsumed into the ducal library, that her books were collected jointly with her husband, Philip the Good, or that she obtained her books primarily as educational tools for her son, Charles the Bold. Margaret's collection may also have been larger and that after her death some of her books were dispersed. Anne Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs in their study *Richard III's Books*, suggest that if she had books in English, they might have been sold off to English collectors after her death.⁶²

⁶¹ Perhaps from the many exceptions presented here, we should rethink whether or not this was really the rule.

⁶² Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books*, 37.

One of the most impressive book collections was that of Margaret of Austria. Several inventories of her books survive and her collection included books that were owned by Margaret of York, Mary of Burgundy, and possibly Isabel of Portugal. However, her book collection has been extensively studied and is beyond the scope of this paper.

Margaret of Anjou

1. Psalterium. Fitzwilliam museum, addit 174 [38–1950] Ce psautier a été exécuté pour Jean de Gand, duc de Lancaster, et a appartenu peut être à Humphrey, 7^{ème} comte de Hereford. On le retrouve entre les mains de Marguerite d'Anjou, femme du roi Henri VI. Au XVI s. il est dans la famille Walton. Plus tard, dans la collection de Lord Stafford.
2. Simon de Pouille, Aspremont; Fierabras . . . BM, Royal 15.E.VICe ms fut offert par John Talbot, premier comte de Shrewsbury, à Marguerite d'Anjou, probablement l'occasion de son mariage avec Henri VI d'Angleterre.
3. Heures. NYPL 32 Ces heures passent pour avoir appartenu à Marguerite d'Anjou.
4. Horae. Morgan 253A la fin du ms, armes avec de nombreux quartiers (Jerusalem, Navarre, Anjou, Bourbon, Valois, Bretagne, Flandres, etc.), qui, d'après Th. Belin, Cat., 1906, no 23, sont celles de Marguerite d'Anjou.
5. Georges Chastellain: Le Temple de Boccace. Vatican, Regina lat. 1520Ce ms a été copié pour Marguerite, reine d'Angleterre et fille de René d'Anjou.

Margaret of York

1. Traités de spiritualité en français. Bruxelles, BR 9106 [V.d.G. 2292].
2. Jean Mansel: La fleur des histoires. [vol. 4] Bruxelles, BR 9233. Le ms est mentionné dans l'inventaire dressé vers 1467. Il a appartenu plus tard à Marguerite d'York, 3^{ème} épouse de Charles le Téméraire, comme l'atteste une signature au fol. 220.
3. Thomas à Kempis: oeuvres en français. Bruxelles, BR 9272–9276 [V.d.G. 2491].
4. Benois seront les misericordieux. Bruxelles, BR 9296 [V.d.G. 2231]. Ce ms a été exécuté pour Marguerite d'York.

5. Jean Gerson: *Traité de dévotion*. Bruxelles, BR 9305–9306 [V.d.G. 1694]. Ce ms a été exécuté pour Marguerite d'York. On voit sa signature au dernier fol. Ses initiales CM sont au fol. 7.
6. *Bréviaire à l'usage de Salisbury* [incomplete]. Cambridge, St. John's College 215 [H. 13]. Le ms fut exécuté pour Marguerite d'York, peut-être avant 1477; il porte ses armes, sa devise "Bien en aviengne" et les initiales CM dans les bordures.
7. Justinus: *In Trogi Pompei historias* libr. XLIV. Escorial, Bibl. monast. e. III.2. Ce ms est originaire de Ferrare. Les ff. 1–98, première transcription du texte copié deux fois, ont été offerts par Marguerite de Bourgogne à son beau-fils, Maximilien d'Autriche. Au fol. 1, armoiries des Habsbourg et dédicace autographe de Marguerite de Bourgogne.
8. *Vie de Sainte Colette*. Gand, Clarisses 8. Ce ms fut offert aux Clarisses de Gand par Marguerite d'York: elles le conservent encore aujourd'hui.
9. *Chronique des comtes de Flandres*. Holkham Hall, Coll. Leicester 659. L'exemplaire est dédié à Marguerite d'York, duchesse de Bourgogne, et porte ses armes et sa signature. Il passa ensuite en Espagne dans la collection de Gaspar de Haro, puis aux Augustins déchaussés de Lyon.
10. Jean de Meung: *Livre de Boece de consolacion*. Iena, Bibl. Univ., Gall. f. 85. Le ms fut copié à Gand en 1476 par David Aubert pour Marguerite d'York dont il porte les armes dans la bordure. Il passa ensuite aux comtes de Nassau et porte les armes de Nassau-Vianden, puis appartint à Jean-Frédéric, prince électeur de Saxe, en 1534–36.
11. Nicolas Finet: *Le dialogue de la duchesse de Bourgogne à Jésus-Christ*. BL, Add. 7930. Au fol. 1 vo on voit la devise de Marguerite, ses armoiries et ses initiales CM.
12. *Horae*. BM add. 38126 . . . Ces heures ont été exécutées et enluminées en Flandre en grande partie par Simon Marmion et aussi par le Maître du livre d'Heures de Dresde. Elles ont peut-être été destinées à Margaret d'York.
13. *Feuillet d'un Graduel*. BM Arundel 71, fol. 9. Le feuillet porte, dans la bordure, les armes de Marguerite d'York. Elle donna le ms aux Franciscains de Greenwich dont elle avait fondé le couvent en 1483.
14. *Fragment d'un psautier ou bréviaire*. BM, Cotton Tiberius A.II,

- fol. 1 + Galba A.XVII, fol. 2 + Vespasianus A.I., fol. 160 vo + Titus Galba A.XVII, fol. 1. Ces fol portent dans la bordure les armes et la devise de Marguerite d'York. Ils pourraient être des fragments du bréviaire Cambridge, St. John's College 215 [H.13].
15. Psautier de S. Augustin. BM, Cotton Vespasian A.I. Ce ms est le plus souvent attribué à S. Augustin de Cantorbéry. On a ajouté une initiale de psautier du XII^e et à la fin, on y collé les armes de la 3^e femme de Charles le Téméraire et la devise: "Bien en Avienge CM(?)."
 16. Quintus Curtius Rufus: Les faits d'Alexandre le Grand. BL Royal 15 D IV. Ce ms fut oddert par Marguerite et Marie de Bourgogne comme l'indiquent leurs double inscriptions, probablement à John Donne dont les armoiries furent effacées et remokacées par les armoiries des Tudor à côté des signatures des donatrices fol. 219.
 17. Vita Christi. BL, Royal 16 G.III. Ce ms a été copié in 1479 par David Aubert pour Marguerite d'York.
 18. Heures. Londres, 1965, 26-27 Mai, Christie, Manson, and Wood no. 195A. L'origine il fut exécuté pour Charles le Téméraire et Isabelle de Bourbon. Ce livre, enluminé de seconde moitié du XV^e s., provient de la bibliothèque que Marguerite d'York; il fait partie de la "Northwick Park collection."
 19. Livre d'Heures enluminé. Londres, 1965, juin, Vente Spencer-Churchill no. 111. Ce ms au décor marginal de style flamand a été fait pour Marguerite d'York et porte ses armoiries. Il a fait partie des collections de Northwick Park qui appartenaient à E. G. Spencer-Churchill et fut vendu en juin 1965 chez Christie à Londres.
 20. Guide des pèlerinages aux églises de Rome. Londres, 1982, 22 juin, vente Sotheby, no. 59. Ce ms a été exécuté pour Marguerite d'York, duchesse de Bourgogne dont on voit les armes au bas de la première page.
 21. Les visions du chevalier Tondal. Getty ms. 30 [87.MN.141]. Cette ms a été copié à Gand en 1474 par David Aubert et enluminé par Simon Marmion pour Marguerite d'York. On le retrouve dans la collection du Marquis de Ganay en 1853, puis dans celle du comte de Lignerolles, du baron Vitta, du baron de Brouwer. Puis chez le librairie Fl. Tulkens, coll. H. P. Kraus à New-York et coll. Philip Hofer à Cambridge, MA, olim Ms. Typ. 234 H.
 22. Guy de Thurno: La vision de l'âme. Getty, ms. 31; 87.MN.152. Ce ms a été copié à Gand par David Aubert le 1^{er} févr. 1474

- pour Marguerite d'York. Les enluminures sont attribuées à Simon Marmion. Il fait partie de la collection de Philip Hofer et portait la cote Typ. 235 H dans le Houghton Lib. de Cambridge, MA.
23. *Horae intemeratae uirginis Mariae, secundum usum romanum*. Metz, Bibl mun 1255. Fol. 10 vo, armoiries de Marguerite d'York, femme de Charles le Téméraire, surmontées de la devise "Bien en la Vierge".
 24. *Guide de pèlerinage aux églises de Rome*. Yale, Beinecke Rare Bboks and Mss library 639.
 25. *Apocalypse commentée*. Morgan 484. Le ms fut écrit vers 1475 pour Marguerite d'York dont on voit les armes dans la bordure du fol. 10. L'écriture est celle du Scriptorium de David Aubert, à Gand, sinon celle de David Aubert lui-même.
 26. *Traité de morale et de religion*. Bodleian, Douce 365 [Madan 21960]. D'après O. Pacht, ce ms. N'aurait peut-être été fait pour Marguerite d'York en 1475: les armoiries de la princesse sont rajoutées et le colophone sur grattage. Ce serait plutôt un exemplaire remanié pour elle par David Aubert.
 27. *Horae*. Paris, Catal. Librairie François I^{er} no. 107. Ce ms enluminé fut exécuté en Flandre pour Charles le Téméraire et Marguerite d'York.
 28. "Le livre du trésor." Saint-Quentin, Bibl. publ. 109. Ce ms a été fait pour Marguerite d'York dont les armoiries se trouvent sur les fermoirs. A la fin, signature: "Margarete d'Angleterre."
 29. *Miroir d'Humilité*. Valenciennes, Bibl. mun. 240. "Cy commence la seconde partie de ce present livre." La 1^o partie dums se trouve aujourd'hui à Madrid. Fol. 444 vo: "Cy fine le volume contenant trois traittiés, c'est assavoir les admonitions traitans aux choses internes . . . grosseé l'an mil CCCC LXII par le commandement et ordonnance de tres hault, tres excellent et tres puissant prince Phelipe, parnla grâce de Dieu duc de Bourgoingne et de Brabant, etc . . .". Au-dessus, la signature: "Margarete d'Engleterre."
 30. *L'abbaye du saint Esprit*. Vesoul, Bibl mun. 91. Ce ms a appartenu à Antoine de Bourgogne et Marguerite d'York puis aux Bénédictins de Norey.
 31. Jean Miélot: *La vie de Sainte Catherine*. olim coll. de Waziers. Ce ms a appartenu à Marguerite d'York. On aperçoit les initiales habituelles CM.

Isabel of Portugal

1. Le Mortifiment de vaine plaisance par René d'Anjou). Bruxelles, BR 10308 Ce ms a été exécuté pour le duc Philippe le Bon et sa troisième femme, Ysabelle de Portugal: fo 1, les chiffres—deux E affrontés pour le duc, et P. Y. pou le duchesse—et les armoiries des deux époux se trouvent réunis dans la bordure, ce qui constitue un cas très rare.
2. Recueil pieux. Lille, Bibl mun. 128 (407) Fol. 252 vo: “Fait et accompli par le commandement de ma tres redoubtée dame Madame la duchesse de Bourgogne et de la main de Jacotin de Ramecourt.” Le même Jacotin de Ramecourt a daté, au fol. 95 vo, son travail du 1er février 1457: cette époque, c'était la troisième femme de Philippe le Bon, Isabelle de Portugal, qui était duchesse de Bourgogne.
3. Vie de saint Bernard. BN, fr. 917 Fol. 291: “Cy fine la vie et miracles de mon seigneur saint Bernard. Escript par le par le commandement de ma tres redoubtée dame madame la duchesse de Bourgogne et de la main de Jacotin de Ramecourt.”

MARGARET OF YORK ON PILGRIMAGE: THE EXERCISE OF DEVOTION AND THE RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OF THE HOUSE OF YORK

Harry Schnitker

Margaret of York's biographers, together with those who have studied her library, have without exception proclaimed her to have been a pious and devout woman.¹ They support their claim by referring to the overwhelmingly religious composition of her library, to her patronage of conventual reform and her donations to religious institutes, as well as to the religious environment in which she grew up in England. With one exception, however, her pilgrimage activities have so far been ignored, mentioned only in passing or discussed in relation to the gifts she made, and then from an art-historical perspective.²

I would like to thank Prof. Anthony Goodman and Drs. Andrew Brown and Graeme Small for their constructive criticism and active contributions to this paper.

¹ See amongst others C. Weightman, *Margaret of York*, chapter 7; L. Hommel, *Marguerite d'York, passim*; W. Prevenier and W. Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands*, p. 249; W. Blockmans, *The Devotion of a Lonely Duchess*, in T. Kren (ed.), *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion, and the Vision of Tondal*, pp. 29–46; L. Delaissé, "Marguerite d'York et ses Livres", in *Marguerite d'York et son temps*, pp. 13–14. Galesloot regarded Margaret's devotion as one of her salient features. J. Galesloot, *Marguerite d'York*, in *Annales de la Société d'Émulation pour l'Étude de l'Histoire et des Antiquités de la Flandre*, p. 212.

² In her essay on the piety of the Burgundian duchesses, Myriam Cheyns-Condé places the pilgrimage activities of Margaret of York and of her predecessors in a more general devotional context. Margaret's journeys to St. Thomas Becket, the Virgin in Halle and the Virgin in Leuven are mentioned, as are pilgrimages to Lier, Alsemberg, Huy and Aardenburg. Her attendance at various processions of St. Rombouts in Mechelen and at the Holy Blood procession in Brugge in 1479 is also indicated. These latter I would hesitate to describe as pilgrimages. The processions formed a religious activity quite separate from pilgrimage. During a pilgrimage it is the act of the journey as well as the visiting of the shrine that constitute the religious activity. In the case of the processions it is the attendance to view the procession that constitutes the act of devotion. M. Cheyns-Condé, "Expression de la piété des duchesses de Bourgogne au XV^e siècle dans la vie quotidienne et dans l'art", in *Publication du centre européen d'études bourguignonnes (XIV^e–XVI^e siècles)*, No. 29–1989, pp. 50–51. Ignoring pilgrimage activity whilst trying to assess an individual's piety is not confined to Margaret of York. Edward IV's pilgrimage to Croyland is mentioned in the *Annales*. J. Stevenson (ed.), *Annales*, formerly attributed to William of Worcester; he is also mentioned in the *Crowland Chronicle*. N. Pronay and J. Cox, *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations: 1459–1486*, p. 102. For the debate on Margaret of York and her crown in Aachen see below.

That this has been the case is curious. Pilgrimage activity was one of the main expressions of devotion during the fifteenth century and can be an indication of the level of religious fervour on the part of the participant.³ Naturally there are problems connected with an attempt to gauge the extent of an individual's religious sentiment from his or her pilgrimage activities. Pilgrimages could often be an excuse to travel, were imposed as penalties and certainly in the case of well-established pilgrimage destinations, can often be viewed as evidence of an externalised show of religion, clouded by worldly practices and considerations.⁴ As Van Herwaarden wrote, however, "de ergste profanatie van pelgrimeren nam de devotie niet weg."⁵

Pilgrimage activity, a frequently ignored expression of religious sentiment, can shed substantial light on the religious mindset of an individual or a society, particularly when placed in a wider religious context. The timing of a pilgrimage is of great significance. Many pilgrimages had special indulgences attached to them at specific periods of time; others could be obtained with some ease. Participation in a pilgrimage with attached indulgences may indicate a genuine fear of purgatory or indeed a more deep-seated fear of hell, in itself a measurement of Christian faith.⁶ The contextualisation of a pilgrimage with events from an individual's life can also throw light on the extent or form of their faith. Besides a wish to gain indulgences, shrines were visited for the miracles connected to them or to obtain the intercession of the saint who was honoured there.⁷ The motivation for going on pilgrimage was therefore the expectation that a visit to a particular shrine would be beneficial to the visitor.

³ J. van Herwaarden, *Pelgrimstochten*; R. N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, pp. 165–168.

⁴ The best example of a well-travelled individual for whom faith was the motivating factor in her pilgrimage activities is Margery Kempe. B. Windeatt (trans.), *The Book of Margery Kempe*. She may be contrasted with that exemplar of Burgundian knighthood, Jacques de Lalaing, who travelled almost as widely as Margery, and who also indulged in many a pilgrimage. For Lalaing, however, pilgrimage was not the main motivator for his journeys. This does not mean that he was not a devout man, but that cannot be concluded from his pilgrimage activity. For the various interpretations of pilgrimage, see R. N. Swanson, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–168; R. C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, pp. 194–195.

⁵ Van Herwaarden, *op. cit.*, p. 124. "Not even the worst profanation could detract from the devotional aspect of going on pilgrimage".

⁶ The most famous of these special pilgrimage years and the indulgences that could be earned was the jubilee of Rome. A similar jubilee also existed in Canterbury, Abzac, Aachen and many other places. P. C. Boeren, *Heiligdomsvaart Maastricht*, pp. 116–155.

⁷ Swanson, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

When placed against the background of the visitor's wider experiences at the time of the visit, the particular quality or qualities of a visited shrine could show his or her belief in the efficacy of the journey.

Margaret of York was a fervent undertaker of pilgrimages, so much so that they may be considered as one of the strongest expressions of her religious life.⁸ As such, these journeys can shed considerable light on the duchess' devotional pattern, but equally on the intensity of her faith and the depth of her religiosity. With Margaret, as with most of her contemporaries, pilgrimage worked on various levels. Her choice of pilgrimage destination was partly determined by family tradition, in Burgundy as well as in England. As duchess of Burgundy, Margaret can be expected to have opted for destinations favoured by the ducal house; as princess of England and scion of the House of York, we may expect to find her visiting the pilgrimage destinations of the English royal family. Elements of politics—an ostentatious group of pilgrims can be quite an efficient way to show the colours—and questions of status also surface in the pilgrimages of high-ranking individuals like Margaret of York. These add to the questions that need to be asked, but may also provide extra answers.

Margaret of York's itinerary is the easiest tool with which to approach her pilgrimage activities.⁹ It has to be stated immediately that the duchess' journeys or sojourns are rarely described as being expressions of religious behaviour.¹⁰ Concealed amongst Margaret's many journeys through the Netherlands, Northern France, England and the Rhineland are, nevertheless, several places of pilgrimage. Besides concrete archival evidence, which frequently has not survived, how can we arrive at a reasonably safe assumption that a given journey was actually carried out with pilgrimage as its main or partial aim?¹¹ Obviously, many of Margaret of York's journeys were made for

⁸ In the best-chronicled part of her itinerary, the period between 1468 and 1477, Margaret goes on pilgrimage at least seventeen times.

⁹ The main sources for Margaret of York's whereabouts are H. vander Linden, *Itinéraires de Charles, Duc de Bourgogne, Marguerite d'York et Marie de Bourgogne (1467–1477)* and P. Robins, *Le veuvage et le douaire de Marguerite d'York dans les Pays-Bas (1477–1503)*. The latter is scantier.

¹⁰ Those that are so indicated are two pilgrimages to Halle in Brabant and one to Aachen in the Rhineland, as well as to Canterbury in England.

¹¹ Aardenburg affords the best example of this lack of archival material, where the Reformation and several wars have seriously damaged the archive. In Aachen the archive does not give the reason for Margaret of York's presence either. This has to be gauged from alternative sources and material evidence.

familial or political purposes. A brief glance at the footnotes in Vander Linden's *Itinéraires* quickly shows if Margaret visited a place to meet Charles the Bold, Mary of Burgundy or Isabella of Portugal or if she travelled on business. This can be further corroborated by comparing the names of the places mentioned in the *Itinéraires* with known Burgundian palaces.

The mention of Margaret's own dowerlands, visited infrequently by her before the collapse of the Valois dynasty's power in 1477, may be another indication that the journey was made without primary religious motives, although occasionally religious activity did prompt Margaret to visit.¹² Other journeys too were made from an obviously non-religious impulse even though a religious element may well have been included. The primary examples are Margaret's visits to Calais in 1475 and to England in 1480, which were connected with Anglo-Burgundian political relations.¹³ In the itineraries, Margaret of York visits several places for reasons that are not immediately obvious and some of these may be of religious significance. The occurrence of a seemingly obscure place is not, however, necessarily an indication of a religious destination. Although close to what was the pilgrimage centre of Aardenburg, the tiny Flemish town of Middelburg for example, was a centre for political rather than spiritual affairs. Margaret's relatively frequent visits there were to the home of one of the Burgundian dynasty's major supporters, Pieter Bladelin 'de Leestmakere'.¹⁴

¹² The duchess was, for example, in Mechelen for the *Peisprocessie*, the town's main religious festival, on several occasions. R. Tambuyser, Margareta van York en Mechelen, in, *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*, 65 (1965), p. 215; E. van Autenboer, *Volksfeesten en rederijkers te Mechelen*, p. 30. One of her visits occurred in 1470, but Vander Linden failed to register this as being of a religious nature. Van Autenboer, *op. cit.*, p. 60; Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 23. In 1480 Mechelen saw Margaret appear for a second visit of a religious nature when she attended the solemnities surrounding the display of the relics of the titular saint of the great collegiate church, St. Rumoldus. Tambuyser, *op. cit.*, p. 215. None of these visits can be classed as a pilgrimage.

¹³ Ch. Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 271; C. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, vol. I, pp. 132 and 284; Ross, *op. cit.*, pp. 223–228 and R. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, pp. 348–350 on Edward IV's campaign against France, when he met Margaret in Calais. That, as Ross noted, the visit of Margaret in 1480 probably caused the introduction of the Observant Franciscans into England, was definitely a side aspect to the main reason for her presence, the attempt at creating an Anglo-Burgundian alliance. This is also true for her visit to Canterbury, although this, unlike her journey to England itself, was a genuine pilgrimage and can be treated as such. Ross, *op. cit.*, pp. 273–4.

¹⁴ For what follows, see Bladelin, in, *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*. Bladelin had started his career as a treasurer under Philip the Good in 1436 and had climbed

Middelburg was the creation of this man, a new town in the fenlands of northern Flanders.

There are, nevertheless, several journeys in the itineraries that on closer inspection were obviously primarily intended as pilgrimages. Some are very noticeable indeed. Vander Linden names the journeys undertaken to Halle in 1470 and 1473 and the one to Aachen in 1474 as visits to *Notre Dame*.¹⁵ As a corollary it can be assumed that her other visits to Halle were also undertaken with the intent of visiting the statue of Our Lady there, for Halle was neither of great political or economic significance.¹⁶ When Halle did become the stage of Burgundian political life, as during the meeting here of the Estates of Hainault with Philip the Good in 1438, it was the convenient location of the town rather than its importance that was the determining factor.¹⁷ Halle's Marian shrine was a well-established one, but Margaret's devotion to it was part of a wider, fifteenth-century trend that saw an explosion in the veneration of miraculous statues of the Virgin Mary.¹⁸ Margaret was not immune to this fashion and Marian pilgrimages were high on her agenda.¹⁹

As Christine Weightman noticed, the Virgin at Halle was indeed the duchess' preferred pilgrimage destination.²⁰ The central role of the Hainault shrine in Margaret's pilgrimage activities is not particularly surprising, for the statue of the Virgin there was of international

up to become the Treasurer of the Order of the Golden Fleece and finally a member of the Great Council. Perhaps most importantly from Margaret's point of view, Bladelin was also a firm supporter of her brother Edward IV.

¹⁵ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 51 and 55.

¹⁶ For Halle's relative economic unimportance and the central place of the Minster of Our Lady see Anon., Halle overvallen in 1488 en in 1489, in, *Gedenkschriften Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring van Halle*, Nr. 9, pp. 168, 164 (1933). The town was definitely not on a par with the large towns of the Low Countries. The statue: 92.5 cm; black; XIIIth century?; traces of polychrome.

¹⁷ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, pp. 172–173. Halle was the most northerly town of the county of Hainault, conveniently en route from Mons to Brussels. It had been used as a meeting place by Duke John IV of Brabant, a tradition followed by the Burgundian Dukes. Anon., *Halle overvallen*, p. 61.

¹⁸ J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 275ff.

¹⁹ In all she spent at least 30 days in 6 years on Marian pilgrimages from the day she first visited Aardenburg in March 1470.

²⁰ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 65. Between 1468 and 1477 Margaret visited Halle five times, to which can be added with certainty another visit in 1501. Others doubtless took place, although the period between 1477 and 1479 and again between 1482 and 1490 would have been too dangerous, the result of warfare. Indeed, Halle was itself besieged by rebels, once in 1488 and twice in 1489. Anon., *Halle overvallen*. Of the six pilgrimages chronicled here, none took place on the first Sunday in September, when the Halle Virgin was honoured with a procession. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

renown and attracted large numbers of pilgrims as well as many pious donations.²¹ As with many shrines, there were various incentives to travel to the *Virgo lactans* in Halle. The main attraction was the large number of miracles which the statue of the Black Virgin had performed, most well attested and some of a recent date.²² As one might expect where the Virgin is concerned these miracles range rather widely. The Halle Virgin interceded for a cure for those who had swallowed needles, saved people from wrongful execution and in one case helped a blind man to see again.²³ By far the most numerous miracles are connected with three distinct categories of intervention. In order of magnitude these are the resurrection of dead children, the liberation of those wrongfully imprisoned and the successful intercession for those in danger of drowning.²⁴

If the number of miracles performed by Halle's Madonna was impressive, there was an added reason for the faithful to visit her shrine. In all there were 1,740 days of indulgences to be earned by those visiting Halle and these were easily come by.²⁵ A large number of days are indicated as those on which the indulgences may be earned,

²¹ Popes Martin V and Eugenius IV as well as Charles the Bold gave to the treasury, as did the Emperor Charles V and King Henry VIII of England at a later date, Hal, in, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition. I would like to express my gratitude to Mevr. Renault of the Kerkfabriek at Halle for her kind co-operation and her generous supply of information.

²² The book with the privileges of the Guild of the Brothers and Sisters of Our Lady of Halle counts fifty-five miracles in all. M. Franssens, *Dit zijn die privilegien van der kerke die miracelen en die teekene die broeders ende zusters Onser Vrouwen van Halle*, pp. 6–59. An example of the importance attached by the compilers of the book to a proper witnessing of the miracles is illustrated by the frequent inclusion of a witness list to the stories. The story of "Een kind van Binche, door zijnen wiegband verstikt, wordt levend" (A child from Binche suffocated by his cradle-band, is revived) serves to illustrate this, for typically we read at the end of the story "Dit zijn die namen van den lieden diet saghen" (These are the names of the people who saw it happen). *Ibid.*, p. 28. The most recent miracles had occurred in 1443 and 1461, with another one during the siege of 1489, when the Virgin had caught the canon balls of the besieging army of Philip of Cleve in her cloak, although this 'miracle' may well have had a much later provenance. R. Clement en J. Decreton, *Halle*, p. 131.

²³ For this and what follows, see Franssens, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–59.

²⁴ There are nineteen cases of resurrected children, twelve of the liberation of those wrongfully imprisoned and eight where people are saved from drowning.

²⁵ Bishop Peter of Cambrai had given twenty days, as had a bishop Guido. They were joined by a bishop Amelbaldus, who gave one hundred. The Patriarch of Antioch and thirty-nine other bishops, conveniently "die welke te lanc waren te noemene met namen en met toenamen" (who were too many to name), each gave forty days. *Ibid.*, p. 4. Pope Eugenius IV approved the indulgences in 1423. Anon., *Halle overvallen*, p. 59.

but the pilgrim need not be restricted by special days. A full set of indulgences was granted to all who “*in dese kerke [. . .] met devocien voer alle zielen segghen een pater nr en enen ave maria op haer knien.*”²⁶ As befitting such an important international pilgrimage place, a large and particularly rich church grew up around the statue, completed in 1410 and dedicated by Pierre d’Ailly.²⁷ Indeed, the statue had been important enough to use the latest architectural fashion, for the basilica was amongst the earliest churches constructed in the Brabantine Gothic.²⁸

Halle’s Black Virgin was particularly popular with rulers from all over Europe. Amongst those enrolled in its guild were the Holy Roman Emperor Louis IV of Bavaria, King Edward III of England, the Counts of Hainault, Holland and Flanders, the dukes of Brabant and of Gelre and the bishop of Lincoln.²⁹ As well as the rulers, their wives and children are mentioned as members. During the fifteenth century the guild appears to have lost its appeal to more prominent individuals. From the upper echelons of the Burgundian state only the Lords of Gruuthuse still make an appearance as members.³⁰ But even if the guild’s prestige diminished, the attraction of Halle as a pilgrimage destination clearly did not.³¹ The connection between the Virgin of Halle and the English royal family is significant in the context of Margaret of York’s devotion to Her. The immediate explanation for Edward III’s interest in the guild may be looked for in the close identification with the shrine of his wife Philippa of Hainault’s family and the king’s need for Low Countries’ allies. For Margaret, a pilgrimage to the Virgin at Halle may at one level at least have been an affirmation of her status as an English princess. To Margaret’s brother Edward IV and her father Richard, duke of York before him, the connection between Edward III and the House of York

²⁶ “In this church say an Our Father and a Hail Mary on their knees for all souls”. Franssens, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

²⁷ Halle, in, *Algemene Winkler Prins*, 1957. Philip the Bold donated statues of the Apostles from the school of Claus Sluter to the Church.

²⁸ P. Daems-Van Ussel en G. Dervaux-Van Ussel, *Kleine Cultuuratlas van België*, p. 82. In 1438, Pope Eugenius IV, already a generous donor to the church and supporter of its guild, raised the church to collegiate rank. H. M. Gillet, *Famous Shrines of Our Lady*, p. 78.

²⁹ Franssens, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

³¹ Traditional guilds such as the one at Halle suffered from competition from newer cults like that of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, which would attract a large number of aristocratic followers during the late fifteenth century. These included Philip the Fair and Margaret of York.

had been of enormous importance, for it underlay the claim of their House to the English crown.³² On another level, the visits may have served to strengthen Margaret's sense of Englishness. Just as with the statue of Our Lady at Aardenburg, the Virgin of Halle enjoyed considerable popularity amongst Englishmen and women and not just during the reign of Edward III.³³

The Burgundian dynasty had its own poignant relationship with the statue of Our Lady at Halle. In the *Hostellerie du Cerf* opposite the church, duke Philip the Bold, the founder of the dynasty, had died in 1404.³⁴ His entrails were buried in the church. When Philip the Bold died in Halle, he was on his way to Brussels to meet the widowed and childless duchess of Brabant, Johanna.³⁵ From her he expected to receive the duchy and in his retinue travelled his two sons John and Anthony. What is not clear, however, is why the duke travelled to Brussels via Halle, at least if we are to disregard the story of a bastard son. Halle was not directly on any route from the duke's lands and it seems therefore that he went out of his way to visit the town. We may safely assume that a visit to Our Lady was the incentive. His grandson Philip the Good also came to Halle on several occasions, with the Virgin there forming a counterpart to his favourite Madonna in Boulogne.³⁶

The devotion of the male members of the house of Valois may have influenced Margaret of York less than that of Isabella of Portugal.³⁷ Margaret's religious preferences mirrored those of her

³² See amongst others Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 28–29, 33; Scofield, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 3–5; P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, pp. 27 and 98. The double descent from Edward III was the pillar of the Yorkist claim to the English crown.

³³ The English formed the second largest group in the membership list of the guild of Our Lady in Halle, after individuals from the Low Countries. Franssens, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

³⁴ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, p. 1, and *Philip the Bold*, pp. 101 and 240; E. Begg, *The Cult of the Black Virgin*, p. 157.

³⁵ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, pp. 1 and 236 and *Philip the Bold*, p. 101. There was a rumour, related by Vaughan, that the innkeeper was an illegitimate son of the Duke. It seems unlikely, however, that the Duke, who had 'eschewed' his supposed previous wantonness in later life, would have frequented a place just because one of his illegitimate children lived there. Unlike his grandson, the Duke clearly did not openly acknowledge the fruits of his extra-marital affairs.

³⁶ Clemen en Decreton, *op. cit.*, p. 131. For Philip the Good's preference for the Virgin in Boulogne, see Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, p. 158.

³⁷ Although Isabella of Portugal had a more varied number of pilgrimage destinations, she also had a predilection for Halle and Boulogne. M. Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 453ff. It is noticeable that Charles the Bold did not visit Our Lady at Halle with Margaret of York, although they did go to Aardenburg together. Vander Linden, *op. cit.*

mother-in-law in more than one way. The two duchesses of Burgundy shared a zeal for reforming monastic orders, were devoted to the same saintly women like Colette of Corbie, Bridget of Sweden and Catherine of Siena and led devout personal lives.³⁸ As with the English tradition, Margaret of York probably saw Halle and its Virgin as part of a dynastic tradition which she was carrying on.³⁹ Her final visit to Halle seems to substantiate this, for it took place in October 1501, when she accompanied Margaret of Austria to the shrine.⁴⁰

The dynastic precedents for the Halle pilgrimage actually serve to obscure the depth of Margaret of York's piety. Did she go to Halle because she held the statue of the Virgin in reverence or did she merely follow a well-trodden path? One would expect a certain continuity in the duchess' pilgrimage activities, for it would have been difficult for Margaret to deviate from the expected external display of religiosity.⁴¹ The fact that she favoured the Virgin in Halle does, nevertheless, serve to remove some of the mist that clouds the fervour of her devotion. The statue at Halle had links with several other places visited by Margaret. Connected to it was a sisterhood, which also served several other miraculous statues of the Virgin.⁴² In all there were four branches of this sisterhood connected to the black Virgins in Halle, Vilvoorde, 's-Gravezande and Haarlem. With

³⁸ For the role of both duchesses in the reform movements see R. P. de Meyer O.P., *La Congrégation de Hollande*, pp. 74ff. for the introduction of the Observant Dominicans; Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 200, and Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 451–452 for the Poor Clares, St. Colette and the Observant Franciscans. My own more comprehensive review of the role of Margaret of York will be published next year in the *Liber amicorum A. Jans*, published by the Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen. For the duchesses as pious women, see Prevenier and Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands*, p. 249; Weightman, *op. cit.*, chapter 7. Of Isabella of Portugal, Georges Chastellain wrote: "Une noble et sainte dame, sainte chrétienne et dévote, chaste, grande aumônère". J.-A.-C. Buchon (ed.), *Oeuvres historiques inédites de sire Georges Chastellain*, in *Choix de chroniques et mémoires sur l'histoire de France*.

³⁹ For the role of medieval women as conduits of dynastic and other traditions, see M. Erler and M. Kowalski (eds.), *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, which has several essays dealing with the topic.

⁴⁰ Cheyns-Condé, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

⁴¹ What was true for Margaret was also true for her brother Richard. A. F. Sutton and L. Visser-Fuchs, *The Hours of Richard III*, p. 79.

⁴² Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 248. This sisterhood, which took care of the statues, ought to be distinguished from the brotherhoods associated with the Guild of the Brothers and Sisters of the Virgin at Halle. This too had various branches, indeed as many as eleven, but these were unrelated to the sisterhood at Halle, Vilvoorde, Haarlem and 's-Gravezande, and did not look after the statues. Anon., *Halle overvallen*, p. 59.

the exception of Haarlem, which was too far removed from her normal itineraries, the duchess was to visit all of these.

Her first visit to Vilvoorde took place in April 1470, seven months before she first reached Halle, en route between Brussels and Mechelen. Perhaps one should not make too much of this visit. Vilvoorde is on the natural route between the two towns and Vander Linden makes no mention of the duchess visiting Our Lady, although that on its own is not enough evidence to make the visit accidental.⁴³ Margaret's third visit to the town in May 1476 can definitely be regarded as a pilgrimage. This time the visit was part of a much larger pilgrimage that significantly also went to Halle.⁴⁴ Clearly Margaret knew of the existence of the link between the two statues at Halle and Vilvoorde. The network of the Sisters of the Virgins of Halle and Vilvoorde also explains another of Margaret's journeys. Her visit to 's-Gravezande took place during what was otherwise a wholly political journey into Holland in October 1476.⁴⁵ In common with most other pilgrimage places visited by her, 's-Gravezande was not a town of any consequence, which makes its inclusion during the 1476 journey all the more striking as all the other ports of call were at the county's major towns.⁴⁶ Just as Margaret probably knew the linkage between Vilvoorde and Halle, it is likely that she was also aware of the presence of the Sisterhood in 's-Gravezande, a likelihood which is increased by the donation by Charles the Bold in 1457 of a silver Calvary on the occasion of Mary of Burgundy's birth.⁴⁷

The fact that Margaret of York undertook pilgrimages to three of the four statues in the care of the Sisters of the Virgins of Halle and Vilvoorde does allow us to draw one definite conclusion: the duchess did have a preference for statues of Black Madonnas.⁴⁸ And conveniently for those wishing to assess the depth of her piety it is this par-

⁴³ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁴⁶ H. P. H. Jansen et al., *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, vol. 2, p. 296 "'te 's-Gravezande . . . is geen echte stad ontstaan" (At 's-Gravezande no real town came into existence).

⁴⁷ The statue of the Black Virgin at 's-Gravezande was visited by Charles the Bold in 1469. Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 19, note Septembre 16 "Le Duc va à Notre-Dame de 's Gravezand et revient le soir à La Haye". This note leaves little space for doubt that Margaret's visit to the same place was also connected with the statue. For the history of pilgrimage at 's-Gravezande, see P. J. Magry en C. M. A. Caspers (eds.), *Bedeveartaalplaatsen in Nederland*, vol. I, pp. 378–83.

⁴⁸ Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

ticular devotion that can indicate the genuine faith of Margaret of York. The four statues in Halle, Vilvoorde, Haarlem and 's-Gravezande had originated in the Holy Land, whence they came to the Low Countries as a gift from St. Elisabeth of Hungary to the ducal family of Brabant. Once again, Margaret's English background could well have played an important role in her devotion: there existed a widespread devotion to St. Elisabeth in England.⁴⁹ The statue now at Halle was donated to the town by Aleidis, daughter of Count Floris IV of Holland and Zeeland and wife of Count John I of Hainault in 1267.⁵⁰ Although both the Holland statues have disappeared, it is clear that they shared another common element, besides the link with St. Elisabeth: they were black.

Several reasons have been put forward for the blackness of the statues of the Virgin, which occur all over Europe. Undoubtedly some have been discoloured over time, the result of candle smoke or oxidation.⁵¹ Whatever the reason for their blackness, they have been the centre of particularly strong devotion.⁵² All over Europe, black Madonnas have been invoked for centuries by women facing the main challenges of their lives: marriage, conception, childbirth and death. Marina Warner gives the example of the Virgin of Montserrat in Aragon, one of the oldest continuously venerated black statues dating back to the ninth century.⁵³ Catalan women afraid of the pains of childbirth or newly wed couples still pray to Our Lady of Montserrat. Dom Jacques de Bascher argued for the Byzantine origins of the black Virgins, tracing them to icons of black Madonnas.⁵⁴ Citing *Notre-Dame de Bonne Délivrance* or *La Vierge Noir de Paris* in the Chapel of the Congregation of St. Thomas of Villeneuve, he gives as the reason for her popularity the capacity of the statue to confer fertility on her venerated. Again there was a particular attraction of the statue to married women seeking either a child or a safe delivery.

⁴⁹ Gillett, *op. cit.*, pp. 77–78; H. Leyser, *Medieval Women*, p. 227.

⁵⁰ H. W. Volmuller, *Nijhoffs Geschiedenislexicon*, p. 11.

⁵¹ Various arguments are put forward to explain the black face and hands of so many statues of the Virgin. For alternatives to the traditional external influences see amongst others Begg, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–8 and B. Davidson, *Afrika*, pp. 45–46.

⁵² Mary, Blessed Virgin I and II, in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, pp. 347–368. Begg, *op. cit.*, pp. 19–24.

⁵³ For this and what follows see M. Warner, *Alone of all Her Sex*, p. 274. Warner is at times a little too eager to see the Virgin as a male tool to subjugate women.

⁵⁴ Dom J. de Bascher, *La Vierge Noir de Paris*, p. 23.

This particular aspect of the Black Virgin appears at first to be absent from the cult at Halle. As mentioned, the Virgin here performed miracles in a variety of cases, but conveying fertility was not one of them. Nevertheless, the Halle Virgin was closely connected to children. It is noticeable that the guild has a large child membership, for parents were almost always enrolled with their offspring.⁵⁵ A closer examination of the miracles also shows that children play a dominant role in the Halle cult. Of the fifty-five recorded miracles, twenty-five involve children.⁵⁶ The clearest evidence that the Virgin at Halle did share the characteristics of all black statues of the Madonna—i.e. the power to give fertility—comes from the connection with the shrine of Louis XI. When his first son, Joachim, was born during his exile in Burgundy, the Dauphin came to Halle to thank the Virgin.⁵⁷ There is no evidence to suggest that his wife had had trouble conceiving, but it is clear that he was grateful to the Virgin for a safe deliverance. The small boy lived for only four months and when he died, his parents chose the church in Halle for his burial, hopeful perhaps that the Virgin would perform another of her miracles and resurrect the dead boy, as she had done with others.⁵⁸ The episode indicates that besides the particular miracles that attached themselves to the Halle Virgin, she shared the basic function of black Madonna's all over Europe.

The association of the Virgin at Halle with all aspects of childhood and children would have made Her very attractive to Margaret of York. In her role as the foster mother of the Burgundian dynasty she would have appreciated the powerful intercession of this particular Virgin on behalf of her adopted children.⁵⁹ This alone would

⁵⁵ Franssens, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 1–102.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 6–59.

⁵⁷ Anon., *Halle overvallen*, p. 61.

⁵⁸ Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 157. Hal, in, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, erroneously gives 1460. P. Champion, *Louis XI*, pp. 130–131, gives July 15, 1459 as the date of birth and the date of the small child's death as November 29 of that year. For Louis XI to name his successor Joachim after the father of Our Lady was a total break with precedent in the French as well as in his wife's Savoy dynasties, and serves to underline their gratitude towards the Virgin for his birth. J. Louda and M. Maclagan, *Lines of Succession*, pp. 124, 128, 130–131.

⁵⁹ Margaret of York's relationship with Mary of Burgundy and with Mary's children and grand-children has often been commented upon, but rarely with so much force as by Galesloot, who wrote "Elle était animée d'une sollicitude toute maternelle pour la jeune Marie de Bourgogne, qu'elle aimait comme si cette princesse eût été sa propre fille". Galesloot, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

suffice to indicate the strength of her belief. During Margaret's lifetime the devotion to the Virgin's motherhood was flourishing. Pope Sixtus IV had referred to the motherhood of Mary in his apostolic constitution *Cum praeclsa* of 1477.⁶⁰ One of his successors, Pope Alexander VI, had a particular devotion to the Madonna of Montserrat and had extended many indulgences to pilgrims visiting the statue. It is beyond doubt that the duchess of Burgundy was aware of the primary aspect of this particular Marian cult, in particular as her mother Cecily Neville had travelled to the Virgin at Walsingham when pregnant with the future Richard III, at a time when Margaret was living with her mother.⁶¹

There is a distinct possibility that Margaret would have been at least aware of the cult of the black Virgin from childhood. Her father's chaplain, Roger Crosse, had been archdeacon of Dublin, a city that played a significant role in Margaret's childhood.⁶² Her father had been resident there as lieutenant of Ireland between July 1449 and May 1450.⁶³ Margaret's two elder brothers as well as her mother Cecily Neville had accompanied Richard to Ireland and although there is no documentary evidence for her whereabouts during the period, it is not unlikely that she would have been with the rest of her family. In any case, Crosse must have known about the statue of the black Virgin in Dublin. Of course, knowledge of the cult from early on in her life does not in itself imply genuine devotion. There is, however, absolute consistency in Margaret's attachment to black statues of the Madonna.

In the case of the statues connected to the Sisters of the Virgins of Halle and Vilvoorde, there is yet another complication and this is their above mentioned association with St. Elisabeth of Hungary. Another statue of the Virgin that received the attention of Margaret of York was that in the church in Alsemberg, just outside Brussels, where the duchess was long remembered.⁶⁴ Her portrait is included amongst those of the great benefactors of the church. These include dukes John III and Anthony of Brabant, Philip the Good, Charles the Bold and significantly saints Sophia of Thuringen and Elisabeth

⁶⁰ Mary, Blessed Virgin I and II, in, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, pp. 347–368.

⁶¹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 275; C. Rawcliffe, *Medicine and Society in Later Medieval England*, p. 179.

⁶² Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

⁶³ A. Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, II, Medieval Ireland*, pp. 560–561.

⁶⁴ For this and what follows see Galesloot, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

of Hungary. The statue of this Virgin was also donated by the saintly Hungarian dynasty and this suggests that at least on one level the devotion to these particular Virgins was also in part a devotion to the donors, a suggestion strengthened by the fact that on at least one occasion Margaret visited both shrines on the same day.⁶⁵

Despite the multifarious aspects of Margaret of York's devotion to black Virgins, we may safely assume that the primary motivation was the cult's main aspect. If Weightman's suggestion that Margaret's devotion to the Virgin of Halle stemmed from her inability to conceive was too sweeping a statement, it is nonetheless correct in its basic assumption.⁶⁶ The support for this comes from a quite different pilgrimage, or rather stage of a pilgrimage. During her journey to Aachen, which will be examined in greater detail below, Margaret stopped at the town of Tongeren in the prince-bishopric of Liège. This was the oldest town in this part of the Low Countries and had been a bishop's see prior to being moved to Maastricht and then to Liège.⁶⁷ Several of its bishops were regarded as saints, and although only of local significance they drew pilgrims to their relics kept at the basilica of Our Lady, the main church in the town.⁶⁸ Margaret's stop here was necessitated by the indulgence rules governing her jubilee pilgrimage to Aachen, but it also had an additional reason. Tongeren was a pilgrimage centre in its own right, possessing yet another miraculous statue of the Virgin Mary. Significantly the statue of *Sede Sapientiae*, Our Lady of Labour, was yet another black Madonna.⁶⁹ The statue, with the Virgin feeding her Child a bunch

⁶⁵ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁶⁶ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 65. I fail to follow her argument that Margaret of York also journeyed to the Abbey of Park in order better to conceive. The abbey is not known to have had a cure for barrenness.

⁶⁷ Tongeren was a Roman frontier town and had the earliest recorded bishop of the region. Three of the incumbents were revered as saints, Lambertus, Hubertus and Servatius. The latter is dealt with in more detail below and was the bishop who moved the see from Tongeren to Maastricht. Lambertus was a close ally of the Pepinides and was martyred. Hubertus was the bishop who moved his see to Liège, the place of his predecessor's martyrdom in 706. He remained a particularly popular saint well into the modern period. A. G. Weiler et al., *Geschiedenis van de Kerk in Nederland*, pp. 14–17. Volmuller, *op. cit.*, p. 349. Monks of St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, *The Book of Saints*, pp. 274, 335 and 505.

⁶⁸ I owe this information to the kerkfabriek and treasury of the church of Our Lady, Tongeren.

⁶⁹ Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

of grapes, is still kept in the treasury of the church today and was renowned as an aid to infertility.

The lack of any children from the marriage between Margaret and Charles the Bold is commonly blamed on the duchess and it does seem that she was unable to conceive.⁷⁰ This failure to fulfil the primary function of an aristocratic wife in the fifteenth century would have weighed heavily on her shoulders. It would therefore have been an act of faith for her to turn to statues of the black Virgin, so widely famed for their power to confer fertility. It is this trust in the ability of a saint to intervene and change a desperate situation that can be put forward as genuine piety. For all the varied reasons for Margaret's pilgrimages to the black Madonnas, the trust that Margaret as an individual placed in the grace of the statues visited makes the journeys above all displays of individual faith. After all, the duchess would have known the text in Matthew referring to the centurion's absolute trust in Christ's power.⁷¹

Margaret of York's pilgrimages to statues of the Virgin Mary cannot always easily be explained in terms of deeply felt devotion. In one case in particular it is extremely problematic to detect her undoubted religious faith as the motivator for a pilgrimage, that of the Virgin of Aardenburg. In all she paid three visits to Aardenburg, which may therefore be classed as one of her main pilgrimage destinations.⁷² As in the case of Halle this is not surprising, for the small town on a side channel of the Zwin, the sea-arm leading to Brugge, was another one of the Low Countries' important international Marian shrines.⁷³ According to tradition the Virgin of Aardenburg was known as Our Lady of the Inkwel, but the name only appeared in the nineteenth

⁷⁰ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 65; J. Bartier, *Karel de Stoute*, p. 236; Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, p. 399. Only Galesloot was gentleman enough not to even mention Margaret's role in the absence of an heir to continue the Burgundian dynasty.

⁷¹ Matthew 8:5-13.

⁷² Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 22, 23 and 59. For Aardenburg as a centre for pilgrimage see Margray en Caspers (eds.), *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 81-8.

⁷³ For the position of Aardenburg both as pilgrimage destination and as trading place see Paridaen et al., *Pilgremme tot Aardenbuerch*; Anon, Aardenburg als bedevaartplaats 1464, in, *Biekorf*, vol. 74 (1973), p. 173; Jansen, H. Q. en Van Dale, J. H., Aardenburgs Stadsarchief, in, *Bijdragen tot de Oudheidkunde en Geschiedenis inzonderheid van Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen*, vol. 1 (1856); B. R. de Melker, *De ontwikkeling van de stad Aardenburg en haar bestuurlijke instellingen in de middeleeuwen*.

century.⁷⁴ The appellation was made popular by the Flemish author Guido Gezelle and this was perpetuated by a popular history of the 1920's.⁷⁵ There is, however, no evidence at all for the name being medieval.⁷⁶ The name is important as there are one or two Virgins of the Inkwel that were or are black, and this could have explained Margaret's visits.⁷⁷ As it stands this is not the case.

Margaret of York's first visit to Aardenburg took place in March 1470, and as the town was her sole destination on this occasion the journey is more likely than not to have been a pilgrimage.⁷⁸ Perhaps Margaret had hoped to visit church and statue from the moment she first saw the towers of Aardenburg on her journey from Margate to Sluis in 1468. Then the church spires announced the end of what had proven to be a dangerous crossing and the beginning of a new life. According to the chronicler Jehan de Haynin, the duchess had knelt down and prayed to Our Lady when she saw the church appearing on the horizon.⁷⁹

Her other two visits occurred whilst she was travelling between Brugge and Gent, and although clearly en route should also be classified as pilgrimages. The usual route between both towns either goes over Ursel or Ecklo, both relatively straight lines between the two important Flemish cities, covering about 50 kilometres in all. To visit Aardenburg would have added about 20 kilometres to this journey in a Flanders that was a notoriously muddy county.⁸⁰ Even travelling

⁷⁴ Bedevaarten, in, *Encyclopedie van Zeeland*, 1982. According to the legend, the Christ-child, seated on the lap of the Virgin, wrote a testimony to the innocence of a weaver on a piece of parchment, thus preventing an innocent man being executed. The original miracle that first gave rise to Aardenburg becoming a pilgrimage place was, however, never mentioned, "MCC LXXIII . . . Apud Rodenburgium miracula in honorem Deiparae virginis aedi coepta". I. M. Baliolanus, *Kroniek*, p. 80.

⁷⁵ K. L. Reepmaker, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de Aardenburgsche Onze Lieve Vrouwe-of Maria Kerk 643-1625*.

⁷⁶ Drs. Staal of the Catharijneconvent Museum in Utrecht provided me with the necessary references for this, for which I am grateful. The debate on the name is given a full airing in R. M. Heeringen en H. Hendrikse, *Nieuw licht op de Maria-verering te Aardenburg*, in, *Zeewes Tijdschrift*, 41 (1991), pp. 97-102.

⁷⁷ Begg, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-156. It is also clear from the contemporary pilgrim's badges depicting Aardenburg that the Madonna there did not hold an inkwell.

⁷⁸ There is further evidence for the religious nature of Margaret's visit and indeed that visiting the statue of the Virgin was the aim of her journey. Charles the Bold had already been there in 1469 with the specific aim of going on pilgrimage to Our Lady. Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 18 "Julliet D. 30. N.-D. 'Ardebourg'".

⁷⁹ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, p. 50.

⁸⁰ The county gained its muddy reputation partly through the efforts of Eustache Deschamps, who wrote amongst others: "En cheminant la boe m'afubla D'un ort mantel" and again, "Quant il pleut la; nulz n'y dance; Les chevaux jusqu'a oul-

on horseback, which is the method Weightman ascribes to Margaret, she would not have travelled at speeds of much over 60 kilometres per day.⁸¹ The detour to Aardenburg added half a day's travel to the journey and as a consequence forced Margaret's entourage to stay overnight at Ecklo. Since Mary, the young heiress to Charles the Bold, accompanied the duchess, the entourage was a substantial one indeed.⁸²

As with Halle the attraction of the shrine at Aardenburg played on several levels. When the statue first manifested its miracles in 1273, it had immediately attracted the attention of Flanders' ruling family. Very soon the shrine gained an even more powerful patron. On 13 November 1296, King Edward I of England extended wide privileges to the burghers of Aardenburg, giving as the reason his devotion to the Virgin there.⁸³ His magnanimity was followed by a visit in person of Edward III who, although wounded, went to the statue to give thanks for his victory over the French fleet at the battle of Sluis on 24 June 1340. Eamon Duffy notes the existence of a cult of Our Lady of Aardenburg at Yarmouth, which he attributed to sailors coming back from Edward III's Sluis campaign. This throws up the intriguing possibility that Margaret of York, who spent much of her youth in an East Anglian environment, was aware of the cult even before her marriage to Charles the Bold, and could explain her prayer of gratitude upon her arrival, which, as De Haynin says, was specifically made to Our Lady.⁸⁴

trance Sont en boe ensevelis". 'Whilst riding the mud covered me like a dirty cloak' and 'When it rains there, there is no joy, the horses sink deep in the mud'. F. Hugaerts, *Heel dit valse land*, pp. 92–93 and 102–104. It was a reputation that was often justified.

⁸¹ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 75; Her assertion is borne out by an entry in the royal archives in Brussels that Galesloot found and which describe Margaret and Mary travelling with as many as thirty horses. Galesloot, *op. cit.*, p. 206. See also N. Ohler, *The Medieval Traveller*, p. 101; Prevenier and Blockmans, *op. cit.*, pp. 23–24. M. Sommé, *Vie Itinérante*, pp. 25–27, who shows that Isabella of Portugal normally travelled about 30 to 40 kilometres per day, at times even 60. Weightman's suggestion of 20 kilometres a day is clearly too low.

⁸² Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 22 and 59. The thirty horses mentioned under note 79 confirm the size of the company.

⁸³ Reepmaker, *op. cit.*, p. 11, who quotes the following source: "Omme die reverence der saligher moeder Marien ende meest ute devocien die wiere to hebben ter saligher Maeght t'poorte ende t'sted van Ardenburch". (For the reverence of the Holy mother Mary and mostly for the devotion that we have for the Holy Virgin in the town of Aardenburg.) The same source is also given by Jansen en Van Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

⁸⁴ Edward III went "anderndachs t onser Lieve Vrouwen t Aerdenburch in pelgrimage". (the next day to Our Lady of Aardenburg on pilgrimage.) Reepmaker,

The fact that Margaret's first visit took place early in 1470 might have a bearing on our understanding of this particular set of pilgrimages. It followed closely on her brother Edward IV's victory in the battle of Losecote Field five days previously.⁸⁵ There may have been an element of thanksgiving in this particular pilgrimage. A second visit followed in April of the same year, when Warwick had once more become a threat to Edward's hold on the throne.⁸⁶ Very soon Edward would himself be at Aardenburg, accompanied by Louis Gruuthuse, temporarily exiled from England later that same year. According to the sixteenth century chronicler Jacobus Meyerus Edward visited the Virgin in order to fulfil a vow he had made. Unfortunately Meyerus fails to say what that vow was, but thanksgiving for a safe arrival in his brother-in-law's lands cannot be excluded.⁸⁷

The dynastic link with the Virgin of Aardenburg, stretching back even further than that with Halle, clearly has a bearing upon the pilgrimage activity of both Margaret and her brother during this dangerous year for their House. As noticed above, the descent from Edward III was always of vital importance with regard to the legitimacy of the House of York. In Burgundy there were only limited ways to emphasise this descent for Margaret; and since his exile Edward was faced by the same problem. The shrine in Aardenburg, with its strong links not only with Edward III and his famous naval victory, but also with the successful warrior-king Edward I, was the perfect place for a number of symbolic gestures on the part of the

op. cit., p. 13. This is confirmed by the Chronicle of Flanders, which states that after the battle it was "zijn eerste werk te voldoen aan zijne godvruchtige gelofte van te gaan bezoeken en eeren Onze Lieve Vrouwe te Aardenburg". (his first work was to fulfil his devout oath to visit and honour Our Lady at Aardenburg.) N. Despars, *Cronijcke van den lande ende graefscpe van Vlaenderen*, vol. I, p. 418; Froissart too describes Edward's pilgrimage; J. M. B. C. Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Oeuvres de Froissart*, vol. 3, p. 212. E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 166.

⁸⁵ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 22. For the developments surrounding Edward IV's temporary loss of the English crown, see Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 126–161; Scofield, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 470–566; A. Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses*, pp. 66–85; P. A. Haigh, *The Military Campaigns of the Wars of the Roses*, pp. 104–138; A. P. R. Obermann en H. Schoorl, Koning Edward IV van Engeland op Texel, in, *Holland*, 13de jaargang, vol. 1, pp. 1–21; J. Huizinga, Koning Eduard IV van Engeland in Ballinschap, in, H. vander Linden et al., *Mélanges d'Histoire Offerts à Henri Pirenne*, pp. 245–56. The events in England were followed closely in Burgundy, indeed some of the activity occurred in and around Calais, on the border with Burgundy.

⁸⁶ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 23.

⁸⁷ Reepmaker, *op. cit.*, p. 14; Jansen en Van Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 329; Jacobus Meyerus, *Commentarii sive annales rerum Flandricarum libri septendecim*, p. 141; Edward's pilgrimage is also remarked upon by Despars, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 418.

dynasty's two most prominent members. It should also be seen in the light of the emphasis that both their parents had placed on their families' royal descent in the symbols of the collegiate churches of Fotheringhay and Ludlow, the centres of the Yorkist lands in England.

The English royal family's intimate association with the statue at Aardenburg was only mirrored in part by that of the Burgundian dynasty. The introduction of Valois rule had not been entirely beneficial to Aardenburg. Philip the Bold did pay several visits to the town, both before and after the succession of his wife Margaret of Male as Countess of Flanders.⁸⁸ Town and church had, however, been plundered by Burgundian troops on 8 January 1383, in the wake of their victory over the Flemish towns at West-Roosebeke, and Aardenburg's problems were compounded by the foundation of Middelburg only four kilometres away in 1452.⁸⁹ Philip the Good tried to make up for his approval of Bladelin's project at Middelburg. He visited Aardenburg in 1425 and a few years previously, in 1421, had extended his protection to all pilgrims to the statue of Our Lady there.⁹⁰

As already noted, his successor Charles the Bold also visited the statue. Both men's devotion to the Virgin at Aardenburg was undoubtedly influenced by that of the formidable Isabella of Portugal. Her devotion to the Virgin of Aardenburg is well attested. In November 1450, for example, she paid her respects to the statue of the Madonna, accompanied by her Portugese relatives in exile in Burgundy.⁹¹ With the clear connection of the Plantagenets with the Aardenburg Virgin in mind, there is some justification to attribute Isabella's interest in the Virgin to the same, dynastic impulses. The Portugese princess was after all a Lancastrian by descent and showed an awareness of her English royal ancestry on various occasions.⁹²

At Aardenburg as at Halle, Margaret of York therefore walked in the steps of both her Plantagenet ancestors and to some extent in those of her husband's family. As indicated this pattern of devotion

⁸⁸ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, pp. 17 and 38.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16; Reepmaker, *op. cit.*, p. 14. For the damage caused by Middelburg to the trade of Aardenburg, see Anon., *Aardenburg als bedevaartplaats*.

⁹⁰ Reepmaker, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Philip wrote to his bailiff about Aardenburg that "notre dite ville est principalement fondée sur le prouffit qui en icelle peut venir le fait et cause de pelerrage de la glorieuse et benite vierge Marie", a profit that was now under threat and that the bailiff should attempt to protect. Jansen en Van Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

⁹¹ Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 78–79.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 395–408; Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 240, n. 1.

does pose its own questions. To add to the problems of interpretation it should also be noted that there was generally a great increase in Marian devotion in the Low Countries and indeed Europe-wide during the fifteenth century.⁹³ Coupled to this was the upsurge in Marian miracles and the establishment of the cults of the Holy Family and *Sint Anna-ter-Drieën*, or the Virgin, Her mother and Son.⁹⁴ In addition, both Aardenburg and Halle were amongst the more popular pilgrim sites in the Netherlands during the fifteenth century and were often the destination of penitential pilgrimages.⁹⁵ Margaret of York clearly participated in this trend. Taking the evidence from pilgrimages to Aardenburg and Halle together, the question arises as to whether contemporaries differentiated between religious and worldly impulses for their devotional practices and whether this matters. Perhaps not. Just as in Halle, Margaret clearly believed that the Virgin in Aardenburg could intercede for her and her family, indeed She was thanked for doing so successfully during the first pilgrimage. Once more it ought to be the belief in the efficacy of the pilgrimage that should guide us to the intensity of Margaret's faith and not the actual motivation for the pilgrimage. In any case, the circumstances that drove the duchess to undertake these pilgrimages clearly refute the notion that she was merely following convention, whilst the visits of her husband and brother to the statue at Aardenburg also throw into doubt the existence of a specifically feminine aspect to this type of devotion.⁹⁶

Going on a pilgrimage in the fifteenth century was rarely an expression of one simple devotion and this proves to have been the case with Margaret of York's journeys to Aardenburg as well. For the English princess, the small town near the Zwin held an extra—religious—attraction. Besides the interest of successive English monarchs in the statue of the Virgin and the export of Her cult to East Anglia, the small town had another connection with England, perhaps the result of having been a member of the Flemish Hansa for trade with London.⁹⁷ In the Flemish town there existed a cult of St. Cuthbert, or rather, of the candles of St. Cuthbert. A twelfth-century

⁹³ Prevenier and Blockmans, *op. cit.*, p. 154; R. Barber, *Pilgrimages*, pp. 65–66.

⁹⁴ J. van Herwaarden en P. de Keyser, *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, vol. 4, p. 407.

⁹⁵ J. van Herwaarden, *Opgelegde Bedevaarten*, 1978, p. 411. I have translated *Opgelegde* here as penitential. They were imposed as punishment.

⁹⁶ Barber, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁹⁷ Paridean et al., *op. cit.*, p. 9.

book of miracles of St. Cuthbert relates the story of how the Northumbrian saint's candles came to be associated with Aardenburg.⁹⁸ A certain Baldwin, merchant from Aardenburg, had travelled on business to England, where he learned about St. Cuthbert. He subsequently talked about the saint at home. During one of his absences the town caught fire and all the houses were consumed, except for his own. This was protected by the Northumbrian saint, who had been invoked by Baldwin's wife. To thank the saint, Baldwin made two large candles, which he took to Farne where he donated them.

Although the story only survives in an English manuscript, there is evidence that it was remembered in Aardenburg itself. The pilgrim's badges from the town all show the Virgin and Child seated, surrounded by a circle and flanked on either side by two tall candles.⁹⁹ The suggestion made by Heeringen and Hendrikse that these were symbolic of Christ may be disregarded, for there seems to be no such tradition and in any case the connection with the story of St. Cuthbert is too obvious to be ignored.¹⁰⁰ For Margaret of York this connection with St. Cuthbert would have been of great interest. Her brother Richard held the saint in particular devotion, and had his feast day celebrated in his college at Middleham as a principal feast.¹⁰¹ Cuthbert also makes an appearance in Margaret's breviary, where he is rubricated, which is certainly not the case with all the saints in the book.¹⁰² There clearly existed a family tradition of a cult of St. Cuthbert, which is not surprising given the northern English descent of Margaret and Richard's mother Cecily Neville. The connection between this family tradition and the Marian pilgrimage place must have made it all the more attractive in Margaret's eyes as the destination for a pilgrimage.

Aardenburg clearly highlights the role played by the traditions of the Yorkist dynasty and of her mother's Neville connection in Margaret of York's pilgrimage activity. The Aachen pilgrimage does the same but this time in a Burgundian context. When examining her journey

⁹⁸ E. Craster, *The Miracles of St. Cuthbert at Farne*, in *Analecta Bollandiana*, LXX, 1952, pp. 5–19.

⁹⁹ The badges are depicted in Heeringen en Hendrikse, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

¹⁰¹ Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

¹⁰² St. John's College Cambridge MS.H.13, F.132.V. I would like to thank the librarian of the College, Jonathan Harrison, for his enthusiastic support.

to Aachen, we are faced by the question whether or not the duchess' pilgrimages were part and parcel of the Burgundian 'theatre-state'.¹⁰³ The presence of the duchess of Burgundy and her large entourage would certainly have been a show of Burgundian splendour and therefore of the potential strength of the Burgundian dynasty. In the case of the journey to Aachen the quest on the part of Charles the Bold for a royal crown also forms a suggestive backdrop to the events.

The pilgrimage to Aachen was Margaret's longest single devotional journey, lasting eight days in all. Vander Linden's description of the pilgrimage as being to *Notre-Dame d'Aix-la-Chapelle* is only partly true.¹⁰⁴ At Aachen, the cloak of the Blessed Virgin was the final destination of the pilgrimage, but formed part of a much more extensive devotional journey. In the thirteenth century, Aachen had successfully claimed the privilege of *Römerfahrt* and since then a pilgrimage to Aachen had been equated with one to the capital of Christendom.¹⁰⁵ Originally a jubilee year had taken place once every five years, changed to once every seven around 1349.¹⁰⁶ At this time the exhibition of the golden bust of Charlemagne was dropped and the showing of the cloak of the Virgin began to take precedence over that of the swaddling cloth of Christ. During these seven yearly jubilees the pilgrim could earn a full indulgence when visiting the relics and venerating the pre-eminent one.¹⁰⁷ To this condition for obtaining the precious full indulgence was added a set of fourteen stations that had to be visited as part of the pilgrimage. Seven of these were inside the town of Aachen, seven others outside. For pilgrims coming from the Low Countries these were Tongeren, Susteren, Sint Truiden, Rolduc, Roermond, Maastricht and Maaseik.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ A. Brown, *Bruges and the Burgundian 'Theatre-state'*, in, *History*, vol. 84 (1999), pp. 573–589; Blockmans en prevenient, *De Bourgondiërs*, pp. 156–163 and 240–245.

¹⁰⁴ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁰⁵ Boeren, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁶ For this and what follows see *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 109. Margaret journeyed to Aachen via Leuven, Tienen, Sint Truiden, Tongeren, Maastricht and Gulpen. She therefore clearly missed out Susteren, Maaseik, Roermond and Rolduc, all places to the north of the most direct route and what is more mainly outside the protection of the Burgundian state. In a period of war, a visit to these stations by the duchess would have been dangerous and she would have preferred to remain on the major west-east trade route. Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–63. For the road between Brugge and Cologne, see Prevenient and Blockmans, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

The year in which Margaret undertook her pilgrimage to Aachen is something of a problem. The only contemporary German source, the *Aachener Chronik*, gives the year as 1475.¹⁰⁹ The normally quite reliable Herman vander Linden, however, places the events in 1474.¹¹⁰ The German chronicle is backed up by the most recent German authority to write on Margaret's main donation to the treasury at Aachen, E. G. Grimme.¹¹¹ Other German sources give 1475, including some considerably closer to the events than Vander Linden.¹¹² Is it possible that he failed to consult the archive in Aachen? After all, he proposes a rather strange itinerary for Margaret when she left London for Burgundy.¹¹³ The main obstacle to dismissing Vander Linden's dating lies in the fact that Margaret was at Calais with her brother Edward IV on 6 July and at Saint-Omer meeting her brothers Clarence and Gloucester between 14 and 18 July, 1475.¹¹⁴ July was the month that Margaret was supposed to have travelled according to Vander Linden. If 1475 was the year of the pilgrimage then the pilgrimage needs to be postponed to another month of that year.

This is not unlikely as the start of the jubilee period was postponed that year. Instead of starting on 10 July, the hostilities involving Charles the Bold in the Rhineland had caused it to be delayed until 10 September.¹¹⁵ Although Vander Linden has Margaret residing in Gent for that month, there is no archival evidence, so there is no reason why she could not have travelled to Aachen after the jubilee had been declared.¹¹⁶ The *Aachener Chronik* does not provide

¹⁰⁹ "In vielgemelter Zeit kam desz hertzogen frawe von Burgund ihr gebede zu Aichen thuen" (In the aforementioned time [i.e. 1475] the wife of the duke of Burgundy came to say her prayers at Aachen.), A. Loersch (ed.), *Aachener Chronik*, in, *Historischer Verein für die Niederrhein*, vol. XVII (1866).

¹¹⁰ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–63.

¹¹¹ E. G. Grimme, *Das Aachener Domschatz*, pp. 111–112.

¹¹² J. Noppio, *Aacher Chronik*, p. 145. The exception is K. F. Meyer, *Aachensche Geschichten*, p. 399. He also gives 1474, but his work post-dates Noppio by almost 150 years.

¹¹³ Instead of having her travel the normal pilgrim route to Canterbury over London Bridge, Vander Linden suggests a route via the Abbey of Stratford. This would have forced Margaret and her retinue to cross the Thames in a boat to get back to Kent, something that is unlikely. See also A. P. Stanley, *Historical Memorials of Canterbury*, p. 203.

¹¹⁴ Despars, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 103; G. Doutrepoint (ed.), *Jean Molinet Chroniques*, vol. I, p. 106.

¹¹⁵ S. Beissel, *Die Aachenfahrt*, p. 94.

¹¹⁶ Vander Linden does not give archival evidence for Margaret's presence in Aachen or in Gent for the month September 1475. Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 69–70.

us with a month, leaving September open as a possibility. Indeed the fact that the jubilee was declared in September of 1475 explains perfectly why Margaret should have chosen to visit Aachen that year. The duchess was certainly interested in obtaining large indulgences, as her efforts to gain one for the display of the relics of St. Romulduis in her dower town of Mechelen in 1480 clearly show.¹¹⁷

Because of the after effects of her husband's recent war in the region, Margaret decided not to visit the northern stations of the jubilee. The fact that Margaret did not fulfil all conditions of the jubilee may not have mattered too much in practice. In the light of her subsequent largesse, it is a safe assumption that the clergy of Aachen extended the indulgence to Margaret, whether she fulfilled all the requirements of the jubilee or not. And this gives her pilgrimage to Aachen a necessarily religious colour. By going to Aachen the duchess could allay her fears for what was to happen in the afterlife, as noticed, a clear sign of a deep rooted Christian belief.¹¹⁸

The year that Margaret undertook her journey was marked by the end of her husband's military campaign in the Rhineland that had culminated in his failed siege of Neuss.¹¹⁹ Should we therefore regard Margaret's pilgrimage to Aachen as a piece of propaganda, as a means to display Burgundian prowess, or even as an attempt to restore a modicum of good relations with the neighbouring princess? If we are to believe the seventeenth century chronicler Joanne Noppio we should. He regarded Margaret's visit as a religious counterpart

¹¹⁷ Tambuyser, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹¹⁸ Oscar Pfister pointed out as long ago as 1944 that there was a strong element of combating fear in traditional Catholicism. O. Pfister, *Christianity and Fear*, pp. 270–340. That Margaret of York, in common with so many of her contemporaries, had a fear of Hell and coterminously was hopeful of gaining reductions on the time she would have to spend in purgatory may be gauged from her opulent version of *The Vision of Tondal* which vividly portrayed the horrors of the afterlife for sinners. She also possessed an *Apocalypse*, or rather a compilation of commentaries on the Apocalypse. Koninklijke Bibliotheek Albert I, Brussel, Ms. 9106, *La Somme le Roi*. These are enough to inspire anyone to search for indulgences. T. Kren (ed.), *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion, and The Vision of Tondal*; T. Kren and R. S. Wieck, *The Vision of Tondal from the Library of Margaret of York*.

¹¹⁹ For the campaign of Charles the Bold in the Rhineland see amongst others Bartier, *op. cit.*, pp. 194–198; Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, pp. 317–319; R. Putnam, *Charles the Bold*, pp. 395–396. She states that the preliminaries to the actual campaign had started early in June of 1474, Vaughan dates it to the middle of 1473. Bartier sees the conflict dating back to March of 1474, with the Burgundian attempt to impose a protectorate on the Prince-Bishopric of Cologne. The tension over this move did indeed precipitate the siege of Neuss and when Margaret travelled to Maastricht and Aachen actual warfare had only just ended.

to Charles's military campaign against the archbishop of Cologne, as atonement by the wife for the husband's actions.¹²⁰ This statement seems suggestive of an ulterior motive on Margaret's part, a gesture of the potential to be gained by co-operation with the duke of Burgundy, a show that Burgundian strength was still formidable despite the failed siege. The lavish display of her gifts to the cathedral—these were valued at around 100,000 Rhineland Guilders—can also be construed as giving the same message.¹²¹ After all, displaying wealth was one of the standard weapons in the diplomacy of the Burgundian dynasty.¹²²

The journey to Aachen also provided Margaret with the opportunity to express both her devotion and her worldly ambitions on a more personal level. It was normal for medieval pilgrims to regard the journey as an opportunity to enhance their religious experience of visiting the main shrine.¹²³ In the case of the jubilee of Aachen, this was compulsory anyhow, but that does not exclude a genuine interest in the religious items to be found at the stations. The duchess' interest in Tongeren has already been given attention. Her next stop was Maastricht, which was to be Margaret's main abode during her journey to Aachen. She was safe here: Charles the Bold was one of the rulers, Louis de Bourbon, Charles's cousin and prince-bishop of Liège, the other. Margaret could certainly also indulge in a rich religious experience here. The town had a large number of churches and monasteries, with as its focal point the huge Romanesque church of St. Servatius. Maastricht's main attraction to religious pilgrims such as Margaret were the relics of this saint.¹²⁴ According to an eye-witness account by a fifteenth-century pilgrim, these included three pieces

¹²⁰ Noppio, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

¹²¹ Beissel, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

¹²² See amongst others J. Richard, *Le rôle politique de l'ordre sous Philippe le Bon et Charles le Téméraire*, in, P. Cockshaw (ed.), *L'ordre de la Toison d'or*, pp. 65–67.

¹²³ J. van Herwaarden, *Op weg naar Jacobus*, p. 131. On page 114 Herwaarden produces a very useful map of the routes from the Low Countries through France and Northern Spain leading to Compostela. They include several of the roads travelled by Margaret of York on her pilgrimages in the Low Countries.

¹²⁴ Servatius had been bishop of Tongeren but had removed his seat to Maastricht, apparently at the command of an angel. He died in circa 384. As the earliest saint in the Low Countries he had a widespread popular cult in the region during the Middle Ages. Monks of St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, *op. cit.*, p. 505; H. M. de Blauw, *Nederlandse Letterkunde I*, p. 47; Weiler et al., *op. cit.*, p. 15; L. Goosen, *Van Afra tot de Zevenslapers*, pp. 293–295; G. J. van Setten, *De santenkraam der roomse Kerk*, p. 61.

of heavenly cloth associated with the saint, his crozier that had been given to him by an angel and his pilgrim's staff, as well as his skull and skeleton.¹²⁵

The bishop's vita was well known in the Low Countries and the German Rhineland and was written in Middle Dutch, incidentally a possible indication of Margaret's ability to understand that language.¹²⁶ Servatius's popularity outside the Maas-Rhine region is amongst others attested by the presence of a wooden retable in the St. Salvator church in Brugge, on which the bishop occupies a prominent position, and this was only one of a plethora of images of the saint throughout the Burgundian Netherlands.¹²⁷ There were several reasons why Margaret of York would have been attracted to Servatius. Amongst these was the strong Marian element in his cult. According to his Middle Dutch hagiographer Hendric van Veldeke, St. Servatius belonged to the Holy Family, and was related to the Virgin Mary.¹²⁸ Important as this may be to underline the devotion of Margaret of York to the Virgin, it is the other compound of the St. Servatius devotion that will throw more light on an additional aspect of her religious practices.

In Van Veldeke's vita, the saint is primarily depicted as a warrior.¹²⁹ He fought the heretical bishop of Cologne and led armed forces against the Arians. In the aristocratic milieu in which Margaret of York

¹²⁵ J. F. Willems, *Aenteekeningen van eenen pelgrim der XV^e eeuw*, in, *Belgisch Museum*, vol. 3 (1839), p. 408. Willems got the story from a Ms in the Burgundian Library in Brussel, dating from 1433. This opens up the intriguing possibility that Margaret of York might have been aware of what the attractions in Maastricht were. She certainly indulged in what Swanson described as armchair pilgrimage on other occasions, for she possessed a pilgrims' guide to the churches of Rome, a place she never visited. Swanson, *op. cit.*, p. 168; W. Cahn, "Margaret of York's Guide to the Pilgrimage Churches of Rome", in, Kren (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 89–98.

¹²⁶ A 'Vita et Miracula', written by Jocundus, is supposed to have formed the basis of Hendric van Veldeke's *Leven van Sint Servaes* from circa 1170. It still circulated in fifteenth century. De Blauw, *op. cit.*, p. 47; J. van Mierlo, *Geestelijke Epiek der Middeleeuwen*, p. 46. The above mentioned account of the pilgrim was also written in Middle Dutch.

¹²⁷ Goosen, *op. cit.*, p. 294, which gives a depiction.

¹²⁸ He was "van Sinte Mariën kunne", 'of the line of St. Mary'. Quoted in Van Mierlo, *op. cit.*, p. 47. The connection with the Holy Family according to the legend came through his descent from Emerentiana, the sister of St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin. G. J. van Setten, *De santenkraam der roomse kerk.*, p. 63.

¹²⁹ De Blauw, *op. cit.*, p. 47; Van Mierlo, *op. cit.*, p. 52. The contemporary conflict between the Burgundians and the prince-archbishop was a strange echo of the vita of St. Servatius, who also fought the Cologne Archbishop, perhaps another reason for his attraction to Margaret.

spent her life, the appeal of these warrior saints was as yet undiminished. Margaret's direct family circle was no exception to this phenomenon, with a devotion to the cult of St. George particularly pronounced. In the treasury of the Burgundian dukes for example, there was a sword that was supposed to have belonged to St. George and Charles the Bold's prayer book contains a vivid illumination of St. Michael. When Philip the Good visited Mons in May 1454, the town had constructed amongst others a platform depicting those martyrs who were also warriors: SS. George, Maurice, Victor, Eustace, Adrian and others, 'to please the chivalry who will see them'. The goldsmith Gérard Loyet depicted Charles the Bold with St. George on a reliquary whilst Edward IV had the Chapel of Saint George built at Windsor, according to Charles Ross his 'supreme achievement as a patron of architecture'.¹³⁰

The pilgrimage to St. Adrian at Geraardsbergen will further illustrate her devotion to this type of saint, but in the meantime the warrior aspect of the St. Servatius cult serves as an example of this element in her religious beliefs. Margaret's visit to St. Servatius formed, as seen, part of the jubilee of Aachen and it must have impressed her greatly. Illustrative of the complex interrelations between religious practices during the fifteenth century, she consequently took up the cult as her own. The chapel of the *Hôtel de la Salle*, her palace in Binche, one of her dower towns that she frequented on a regular basis after 1477, was dedicated to St. Servatius.¹³¹ This had been the case since 1170, but Margaret's private chapel in Binche, which she had built there, also had the Maastricht saint as its titular.

The Aachen records that relate of Margaret's visit in 1475 are all silent on the donation of what today is considered to be one of the Minster's main treasures, the crown that bears the duchess' name.¹³² Despite this deafening silence, we can take it as given that the precious object was indeed donated on the occasion of Margaret's pilgrimage. Indeed, it would be difficult to explain how else the coronet,

¹³⁰ J. Huizinga, *Herfsttij der middeleeuwen*, p. 72; Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, pp. 335–336. For Charles's prayer book, see Kren and Wieck, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Bartier, *op. cit.*, pp. 98–99, for Loyet and Ross *Edward IV*, p. 275.

¹³¹ For this and what follows, see Th. Lejeune, *Histoire de la Ville de Binche*, p. 277.

¹³² Domschatzkammer Aachen, Krone der Margarete von York, um 1461, with a leather case. (contemporary). H. 13.2 cm, diam. 12.5 cm. gold, diamond cross and circles, enamelled letters in green, red and white forming the words MARGARIT DE OK. Precious stones in the form of red and white roses. Margaret's devise, *Bien en avénie*, is on the crown.

Margaret's most precious piece of regalia, came to be in the treasury at Aachen.¹³³ Prevenier and Blockmans for one accepted that it had been an act of personal devotion.¹³⁴ There is some debate on the origins of the crown and on whether Margaret actually wore it during her wedding to Charles the Bold, but that it belonged to the duchess is beyond doubt.¹³⁵

The question as to whether she wore the coronet at her wedding is an important one, for this could provide an insight into an important motivation for her participation in the jubilee. Compton Reeves has proposed the most elegant solution for its diminutive size, held by many to be an obstacle to Margaret wearing it at all.¹³⁶ He suggested that it was "probably worn high on Margaret's head to enhance her flowing blond hair".¹³⁷ The donation of votive crowns to the Blessed Virgin was not a new phenomenon during Margaret's life, nor was it restricted to the Low Countries and the Rhineland, but was popular at the Burgundian court, especially with Isabella of Portugal.¹³⁸ The Virgin of the Pillar at Saragossa may serve as an example of a statue that was a regular recipient of votive crowns during the period.¹³⁹ The coronation and Queenship of the Virgin Mary can, like most aspects of her cult, be viewed on several levels. It played an important role in the mysticism of writers such as Bernard of Clairvaux and Paschasius Radbert, through whose sermon on the Assumption of Our Lady the notion of the Virgin as Queen was disseminated

¹³³ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 44. J. Squilbeck, *Couronne votive de l'image miraculeuse d'Aix-la-Chapelle*, in, *Marguerite d'York et son temps*, pp. 45–47. P. W. Hammond, *The Coronet of Margaret of York*, in, *The Ricardian*, vol. VI, no. 86 (1984) p. 365.

¹³⁴ Prevenier and Blockmans, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

¹³⁵ For the debates on the coronet's provenance and whether or not Margaret of York wore it at her wedding, see Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 44; P. W. Hammond and A. F. Sutton, *Richard III*, p. 32 and J. Squilbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 47. Anton van der Lem, the editor of the latest Dutch language edition of Huizinga's *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen*, never even questions the use of the coronet, p. 137, a view shared by Prevenier and Blockmans, *op. cit.*, p. 360. P. W. Hammond, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

¹³⁶ F. Bock, *Die kleinode des Heiligen Römischen Reiches Deutscher Nation* and Beissel, *op. cit.*

¹³⁷ C. Reeves, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Medieval England*, pp. 60–61. The Domschatzkammer dates the crown to circa 1461, which consequently would give it an English provenance. The crown may well have been made for Margaret for the occasion of her brother's coronation as King of England that year. This may explain why it was so small; Margaret was just fifteen years old when Edward gained the throne. It also lends strength to the assumption that the coronet was worn by Margaret on the occasion of her wedding, for it affirmed her royal status.

¹³⁸ Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, p. 32.

¹³⁹ Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–117.

to a large audience.¹⁴⁰ Another vehicle for the popularisation of the cult of the Queenship of Mary was the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, which brought the cult to a wider, and perhaps less intensely devout audience.

Although the concept of the Queen of Heaven appealed to many, it had a specific significance for female rulers or the wives of rulers.¹⁴¹ Since the fourteenth century there had been an emphasis on the similarity between the heavenly Queenship of the Virgin Mary and the earthly functions of women such as the Queen of France, first promulgated by Engelbert of Admont.¹⁴² Just as the election of the Virgin as the Mother of God had set Mary apart, so marriage with earthly rulers set queens apart. An attraction to the Queen of Heaven would therefore have been a natural and even highly symbolic public act of devotion for the duchess. This tradition lends credence to Weightman's suggestion that Margaret's donation of her crown to the Virgin in the Imperial capital could well have been a symbolic gesture in support of Charles the Bold's quest for a royal crown, and is symbolic for the political partnership between duke and duchess.¹⁴³ Although this interpretation of Margaret's pilgrimage to the Aachen Virgin as a public act rather than an expression of personal faith is too one-sided, there is enough evidence to suggest that the duchess was keenly aware of her royal descent. Most of her books carry the inscription *Margarete d'Angleterre*, whilst those dedicated to her are invariably dedicated to "*princesse Marguerite d'Yorck*", and not to the duchess of Burgundy, indicating a certain disdain for the Burgundian title that she acquired by marrying Charles the Bold.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ The sermon was included in the breviaries of the Roman and Sarum rites until 1570. H. Graef, *Mary. A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, pp. 178–179. It was in this form that Margaret would have encountered it, her own breviary being of the Use of Sarum.

¹⁴¹ L. Fradenburg, *City, Marriage, Tournament*, pp. 85ff. Both Queenship and coronation of the Virgin Mary sparked much literature, for example in the Trinity College Dublin MS. 516 and MS. Laud Miscell. 213.

¹⁴² Graef, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

¹⁴³ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 88. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, pp. 317–318, suggests a possible link between the Neuss campaign and the failure on the part of Charles to secure the royal dignity. The Queenship of the Virgin was clearly of interest to Charles as well and its association with temporal Queenship understood by him. For the music of his marriage to Margaret, Antoine Busnois's *Regina coeli* was played. Koninklijke Bibliotheek Albert I, Brussel, Ms. 5557.

¹⁴⁴ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 217; Hommel, *op. cit.*, p. 140. K. A. Barstow, *The Library of Margaret of York and Some Related Books*, in Kren (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 259–264.

Perhaps Margaret, the princess of England and descendant of kings spurred on her husband in his attempts to gain the royal title. The symbolic act of donating the crown of a ruler to the Queen of Heaven to underline the rightfulness of a quest for the royal title was one that occurred once more in a Yorkist context. In 1487 the crown used in the coronation of Lambert Simnel, the Yorkist pretender to the English crown, was donated to the statue of the Virgin in Dublin.¹⁴⁵ Despite all this evidence, the argument that Margaret's pilgrimage to Aachen was little more than politics dressed up as religious practice does not sit easily with what her other pilgrimage activities have revealed about her faith. It heralds an undesirable return to Huizinga's long abandoned interpretation of late medieval religion as 'totally exteriorised'.¹⁴⁶ This interpretation excludes the possibility of the existence of genuine and internalised piety in the public shows of devotion that were commonplace in the period. Of course Huizinga allowed for the intensity of religious experiences in the Burgundian epoch, but sees it as moribund. And that conclusion in turn sits uneasily with the evidence of the strength of Margaret's religion. In the case of the pilgrimage to Aachen, as with all her other pilgrimage activity, there are a multiplicity of factors at play.¹⁴⁷

If the level of religious involvement of the duchess is to be assessed, which is already indicated by the fact that the journey took place during a jubilee year, the focus should be on the central act of the whole pilgrimage, the donation of the crown. For paradoxically it is this donation that can be used as evidence for Margaret's deep and intellectual religious motivations. If the donation as such is conventional, then what is being donated is far less so. It was the coronet that the duchess had worn at her wedding, the very symbol of her own majesty. Made in England and probably worn by her for her brother's coronation that had turned her House from royal relations to royal family, it confirmed her own royal status. Wearing it made her a woman of power and it was this that Margaret left behind in the church at Aachen.

¹⁴⁵ Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 240. For the coronation see A. J. Otway-Ruthven, *A History of Medieval Ireland*, p. 403.

¹⁴⁶ Huizinga, *op. cit.*, pp. 183ff.

¹⁴⁷ Unmentioned so far is the connection between the Valois dukes of Burgundy and Aachen. Philip the Bold visited the town in 1439, coming on pilgrimage to the Virgin. A. Hausmann, *Aachen im Mittelalter*, p. 215. Charles the Bold also visited Aachen, firstly in 1472 and again in 1474 and 1475. F. Haagen, *Geschichte Aachens von seinen Anfängen bis zu neuesten Zeit*, vol. 2, p. 87.

She could have given any crown or had one specially made, for the duchess of Burgundy was not poor by any stretch of the imagination.¹⁴⁸ Instead she gave the coronet that is still in Aachen. This places the whole affair in a different light. The devotion to the Queen of Heaven, the symbolism of the place, even the jubilee and its indulgence: they all become subject to this one overriding act of humility. The crown of the duchess became that of the Virgin, a translation of the glory of Margaret to Mary.¹⁴⁹ Margaret of York thus performed an act of humility, for that is surely what lay behind this gesture. By giving the symbol of her worldly position *par excellence* to the Virgin, Margaret made a gesture that would not have been lost on her contemporaries, by whom the distinction between intense faith and public ceremonial and between religious devotion and political gesture was not yet made.

Vander Linden recognised only one of Margaret's pilgrimages that did not have a Marian shrine as its destination, that to Canterbury in 1468, a view that was shared by Cheyns-Condé.¹⁵⁰ It is clear, however, that Margaret undertook at least one other non-Marian pilgrimage. Her destination was the shrine of St. Adrian in the Benedictine abbey at Geraardsbergen. Margaret visited Geraardsbergen on several occasions en route, which may have been accidental. The same cannot be said of the special journey that she undertook to Geraardsbergen in 1476.¹⁵¹ That the significance of Margaret's journey to Geraardsbergen has been overlooked so far is puzzling but may perhaps be explained by her absence in the archive in the town.¹⁵² The close ties between the Burgundian dynasty and the abbey are, however, well attested. It played host to Philip the Bold in 1396 and to John the Fearless in 1400, whilst both Philip the Good and Charles the Bold were also frequent visitors.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ The income that she received whilst Charles was still alive amounted to 22,000 livres per annum for regular expenses with another 4,000 for extra expenses. To this should be added the frequent donations by her future dower towns. Galesloot, *op. cit.*, p. 198. Margaret's income from her dowerlands, an income that she only received post 1477, has been estimated at 16,000 golden crowns p.a. Tambuyser, *op. cit.*, p. 213, n. 4 and especially Robins, *op. cit.*, which gives an enormous amount of detail. It may have been that she had her name added to the crown.

¹⁴⁹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹⁵⁰ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Patricia Robins failed to notice the journey of 1480 to England in her itinerary.

¹⁵¹ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, pp. 31, 42, 43, 51, 67, 72 and 74.

¹⁵² F.-H. d'Hoop, *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Grammont*.

¹⁵³ G. van Bockstaele, *De St.-Adriaansabdij*, p. 25; G. van Bockstaele, *Abbaye de St.-Adrien à Grammont*, p. 98.

Since the 1440's its abbots had been ducal councillors and Abbot Raso van der Schueren, who governed the abbey when Margaret paid her visit, was attached to the ducal court where he celebrated Mass.¹⁵⁴ At the abbey itself, a regular Mass was being said for Charles the Bold and Mary of Burgundy on the orders of Chancellor Hugenot, who had paid the abbey eight guilders for this service in 1474.¹⁵⁵ Of course, Mary's connection with the abbey would have influenced Margaret greatly. It may well have been her young stepdaughter who first introduced her to the cult of St. Adrian. Together they visited Sint Andries, a short distance to the south-east of Brugge, slightly over a year after Margaret's marriage to Charles, in September 1469.¹⁵⁶ The abbey here had a prayer confraternity associated with the abbey at Geraardsbergen, which linked it firmly to the cult of St. Adrian that flourished in the southern Flemish town.¹⁵⁷

The shrine of St. Adrian was one of the most important pilgrimage destinations in the fifteenth-century Low Countries.¹⁵⁸ It was not just popular with the Burgundian dynasty and with king Louis XI of France. Pilgrim's badges from all over the region confirm the attraction of the cult for the burghers of the Burgundian lands.¹⁵⁹ The shrine was the destination of many a penitential pilgrim and, as seen above, his statue was included amongst those of the warrior saints erected in Mons for Philip the Good's entry in May 1454.¹⁶⁰ He also appears on a variety of calendars from the period.¹⁶¹ The relics of St. Adrian of Nicomedia had reached the Abbey of St. Peter at Geraards-

¹⁵⁴ Abbots Adriaan Krimpe (1440–1447), Nicasius de Frasne (1447–1461) and Rase van der Schueren (1461–1488) were all close allies of the Burgundian dynasty, although that did not prevent the last two from enjoying good and especially profitable relations with Louis XI of France. Van Bockstaele, *De St.-Adriaansabdij*, p. 25; Van Bockstaele, *Abbaye de St.-Adrien à Grammont*, p. 98.

¹⁵⁵ Van Bockstaele, *Abbaye de St.-Adrien à Grammont*, p. 99.

¹⁵⁶ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

¹⁵⁷ Van Bockstaele, *De St.-Adriaansabdij*, p. 52.

¹⁵⁸ Van Herwaarden, *Opgelegde Bedevaarten*, does not list the abbey as being amongst the leading pilgrimage destinations in the Low Countries, but is certainly mistaken, perhaps the result of basing this interpretation on penitential pilgrimages. Both shrine and processions of the saint's relics drew in huge crowds, for which Philip the Good and Charles the Bold actually issued special regulations. Van Bockstaele, *De St.-Adriaansabdij*, p. 96.

¹⁵⁹ St. Vandenbergh, "Pelgrimstekens uit Mechelse baggerwerken", *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*, vol. 79 (1975), pp. 94–96.

¹⁶⁰ Van Herwaarden, *Opgelegde Bedevaarten*, p. 694.

¹⁶¹ See for example I. Soltész Zoltánné, *Flamand Kalendárium*, p. 15.

bergen from Roucourt (Péruwelz) towards the end of the twelfth century and had become such an important attraction that St. Adrian even replaced St. Peter as the titular of the abbey.¹⁶² The cult also proved remarkably resilient. Even by the second half of the sixteenth century, with the turmoil of the Reformation breaking out all around, Abbot Ruffault thought it necessary to insert a clause on how to deal with pilgrims in his new regulations for the abbey.¹⁶³ St. Adrian's main function at Geraardsbergen was that of a plague saint, perhaps the reason for the longevity of his attraction.¹⁶⁴ But the saint who had been a commander in the Roman army was also venerated as a warrior saint and was invoked against sudden death.

Devotion to warrior saints like St. Adrian permeated the international aristocratic environment of fifteenth-century Europe. The association with these knightly saints came as natural to the aristocracy of the period as that with the Queen of Heaven to Margaret of York and other female rulers. Indeed aristocratic women shared in the devotion. For the aristocratic elite the merger between their cult of war and the Christian faith was seamless and total. The ceremonial surrounding the meetings of the chapters of the orders of chivalry all over Europe was an intangible mixture of secular and sacred.¹⁶⁵ The names of the patron saints reflect this; the warrior St. George for the Order of the Garter and as the eponymous saint for the order of chivalry founded by the emperor Frederick III; the peaceful Virgin Mary for the Order of the Golden Fleece and the Order of the Star.¹⁶⁶ It may therefore be clear that what attracted the Burgundian dynasty to the cult of St. Adrian was its military aspect. This is best illustrated by the role of the saint in the Burgundian army. In his ordinance of St. Maximin of Trier of October 1473, Charles the Bold had ordered that St. Adrian was to be displayed on the standard of one of his twenty companies of ordinance, his

¹⁶² Van Bockstaele, *De St.-Adriaansabdij*, pp. 91–92.

¹⁶³ G. van Bockstaele, *De Sint-Adriaansabdij te Geraardsbergen*, p. 76. This rule also gives an indication of what it took to be a pilgrim to St. Adrian; Mass for pilgrims was celebrated at six o'clock in the morning! *Ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁶⁴ Van Bockstaele, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

¹⁶⁵ J. and M. Vale, *Knightly Codes and Piety*, in N. Saul (ed.), *Age of Chivalry*, pp. 34–35.

¹⁶⁶ J. Richard, *La Toison d'or comparée aux autres ordres chevaleresques du moyen âge*, in P. Cockshaw (ed.), *L'ordre de la Toison d'or*, pp. 18–19. On an alabaster from Nottingham, St. Michael and the Virgin Mary appear together. Duffy, *op. cit.*, illustration 120.

standing army.¹⁶⁷ Thus Adrian became one of the 'Company Saints'. There were other, less overtly military saints fulfilling this role, but Adrian must have been regarded as a particularly appropriate patron saint for Charles' army.

Margaret's pilgrimage to St. Adrian is another typical exponent of an expression of religious devotion in a form that one might expect from her. It is part of a wider, familial cult as was the case with the Virgin at Aardenburg, whilst the cult of the warrior saint formed part of the everyday life of any woman of her status. What is significant is not the journey itself, but the combination of a visit to the warrior saint's shrine in Geraardsbergen and the political, or rather the military, situation at the time of the journey. Charles the Bold had embarked upon his campaign in Lorraine that he hoped would deliver the kingdom that the Emperor Frederick III had denied him by fleeing Trier in 1473, but that would instead end with his death. After a lengthy siege he had captured Nancy on 11 January 1476 and had moved on to Besançon, where he remained until 6 February.¹⁶⁸ According to Vaughan, from there the duke sent letters asking for provisions, definitely to Geneva and Dijon, but perhaps also elsewhere. It is likely that notification of his recent conquest would also have been sent to Gent, where Margaret and Mary of Burgundy were at the time.¹⁶⁹ A letter would have taken approximately six days to arrive in Flanders and news of Charles's new campaign against the Swiss Confederation would have been known by 12 February.¹⁷⁰

It is therefore reasonable to surmise that Margaret of York travelled on pilgrimage to St. Adrian to ask for his intercession for a Burgundian victory. She repeated her visit to the shrine as part of a much wider pilgrimage in May of the same year.¹⁷¹ Nor would this have been extraordinary behaviour. Pilgrimages were often undertaken with profane motives.¹⁷² By 1476, Margaret of York had become an important player in the politics of the Burgundian dynasty, controlling much of the government of the Netherlandic principalities as Charles

¹⁶⁷ N. Michael, *Armies of Medieval Burgundy*, pp. 12–14; Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, pp. 223–224. For the banners, see F. Duechter, *Die Burgunderbeute*.

¹⁶⁸ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹⁶⁹ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, p. 366; Putnam, *op. cit.*, pp. 416ff., for what follows.

¹⁷⁰ News of Charles the Bold's death took circa five days to reach Gent in 1477, and Ohler, *op. cit.*, p. 101, corroborates the time lapse by giving as a distance covered by courier circa 100 kilometres per day. Gent to Besançon is circa 500 kilometres.

¹⁷¹ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

¹⁷² M. Wade Labarge, *Medieval Travellers*, p. 86.

was away fighting the Swiss and the Lorrainers. In April of 1476 she was negotiating with the Estates of Flanders over money and supplies for the Burgundian armies, and in October 1476 travelled to Holland to engage the Estates of that County in a similar debate.¹⁷³ Considering the enormous strains that the wars were putting on the dynasty, it is not surprising that the duchess turned to religion for a solution. In this respect the belief that the saint could prevent sudden death should also be kept in mind.

As with her journeys to the black statues of the Madonna, Margaret must have believed in the effectiveness of a pilgrimage to St. Adrian. With the pilgrimages to Geraardsbergen, we also have one more example of the powerful duchess of Burgundy engaged in both the outward show of ostentatious power and in an act of public devotion. We equally see a woman in a period of crisis falling back on the religious certainty that the pilgrimage would be effective, in other words a fifteenth-century individual who is not making any distinction between outward shows of devotion, daily life and internalised piety, a woman involved in an act of deep faith.

The final evidence for pilgrimages undertaken by Margaret of York on the continent comes from north-western France. Margaret's visit to Boulogne once more throws up evidence for the Marian orientated aspect of many of her pilgrimages. For many in the Low Countries and for those from England who travelled overland to Santiago de Compostela, Boulogne and the statue of Our Lady of the Great Return would have been a familiar stopover.¹⁷⁴ It was equally an important site for those en route to Rome.¹⁷⁵ But Boulogne was also an important destination in its own right. It had become a pilgrimage destination almost overnight in 1211, although the exact reason remains a mystery. The legend on the origins of the statue, which was supposed to have floated onto the coast in an abandoned boat, only dates from the early fifteenth century.¹⁷⁶ It is possible that the invention of the legend took place to bolster the popularity of the shrine, but whatever the reason the statue retained its huge popularity

¹⁷³ J.-P. Soisson, *Charles le Téméraire*, pp. 245ff.; M. J. van Gent, 'Pettijelike Saken', p. 140.

¹⁷⁴ R. Barber, *Guide to Medieval Europe*, map 3, pp. 14–15.

¹⁷⁵ J. van Herwaarden, *Op weg naar Jacobus*, map of routes in the Low Countries and Northern France, p. 114.

¹⁷⁶ Sumption, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

all across Europe during the later middle ages. In a well-known passage in the *Canterbury Tales*, the Wife of Bath boasts about her visit to Boulogne: "At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne, In Galice at Seint-Jame and at Coloigne".¹⁷⁷

The duchess' own visit to Boulogne not only followed in the footsteps of many of her English countrymen such as Kings Henry III and Edward II, the Black Prince and John of Gaunt, but also reaffirmed the close connection between the Burgundian dynasty and Our Lady of Boulogne.¹⁷⁸ It was certainly duke Philip the Good's favourite place of pilgrimage. In all he visited Our Lady at Boulogne at least twelve times.¹⁷⁹ It was a passion shared by his son Anthony, the Great Bastard, who besides undertaking the pilgrimage also possessed a book with the legend.¹⁸⁰ Philip was at times joined by his wife Isabella, who also displayed a marked interest in the site.¹⁸¹ Margaret was less enthusiastic: after one visit in 1471 she did not return, although the capture of Boulogne by Louis XI's army in 1477 would have made any visits after that date impossible.¹⁸²

Boulogne and the attraction that it held for rulers and ruled alike serves to underline Eamon Duffy's contention, namely that one should not really distinguish between elitist and popular religion during the fifteenth century.¹⁸³ Margaret's devotional activities provide more support for the Duffy thesis on several occasions for she participated wholeheartedly in mass devotional pilgrimages. The journey to Aachen, with its hundreds of thousands of visitors and those to Halle, equally popular, are but two aspects of this.¹⁸⁴ Margaret's devotion to the black Marian statues is another 'popular' facet of her religious activities, for the fertility symbolism of these statues has often resulted in them being 'relegated' to the 'popular' division of devotion.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁷ G. Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, The Wife of Bath's Tale.

¹⁷⁸ D. Attwater, *A Dictionary of Mary*, p. 34.

¹⁷⁹ Sumption, *op. cit.*, p. 264. Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, p. 128.

¹⁸⁰ My gratitude goes to the curate of the Church of Notre-Dame at Boulogne for this information.

¹⁸¹ Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, p. 454.

¹⁸² Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

¹⁸³ Duffy, *op. cit.*, Introduction, pp. 1-8 *passim*.

¹⁸⁴ On one day in 1496 there were no fewer than 142,000 visitors to Our Lady at Aachen. Swanson, *op. cit.*, p. 166. The large number of entries into the register of the Guild of Our Lady at Halle bear witness to its continued popularity. With its mix of aristocratic and common members it also attests to its appeal to all parts of society. Franssens, *op. cit.*, vol. 2.

¹⁸⁵ Begg, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-24.

Boulogne was not the only corner of this part of the continent with strong religious connections to England. At Tournai, but particularly at Saint-Omer, there was a large number of relics associated with St. Thomas Becket.¹⁸⁶ These included his tunic, hair shirt, hairs, blood and his staff, to which should be added his crozier, still at Saint-Omer.¹⁸⁷ This association with St. Thomas of Canterbury would have been highly seductive to the *princesse d'Angleterre*, for whom the connection between the cult of the martyred archbishop and the English royal dynasty was a part of the English royal 'myth'.¹⁸⁸ The relics of St. Thomas, like his cult, were geographically widespread across Europe but Saint-Omer seems to have had a rather larger number than most.¹⁸⁹ It was certainly the main receptacle for the relics in the Low Countries and therefore the easiest one for Margaret of York to reach. On its own the pilgrimages to Saint-Omer could be interpreted in a number of different ways. Combined with Margaret's pilgrimage activities in England, only one conclusion is possible.

She visited the shrine of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury twice, the first time on her way to marry Charles the Bold in 1468, the second time when she was in England as the chief negotiator of Maximilian in 1480.¹⁹⁰ Devotion to St. Thomas on the part of the English royal dynasty is unremarkable and during the fifteenth century it had persisted with vigour. Henry IV was buried in Canterbury cathedral next to Becket's shrine and Henry VI had been anointed king of France with sacred oil of St. Thomas.¹⁹¹ Thomas Becket also appeared in the Book of Hours of Richard III.¹⁹² The devotion to St. Thomas loomed large on the devotional horizon of the House of York, quite possibly for the same reason as the proximity of burial to the shrine was important to Henry IV: it somehow justified or atoned for their coup d'état. Edward IV's devotion to St. Thomas

¹⁸⁶ For Saint-Omer see G. G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 169; for Tournai, A. Voisin, *Notice sur une chasuble de St. Thomas de Canterbury, conservée à Tournai*.

¹⁸⁷ A. Derville et al., *Histoire de St.-Omer*, p. 94.

¹⁸⁸ For the connection between the English royal family and St. Thomas Becket, see below. For the English sense of royalty see H. Schnitker, "Margaret d'Angleterre and the Construction of Female Identity in the Fifteenth Century", in A. Butcher (ed.), *Contesting Identities 1000–1600*.

¹⁸⁹ D. J. Hall, *English Mediaeval Pilgrimage*, p. 153.

¹⁹⁰ Vander Linden, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 271, 273 and 283; Weightman, *op. cit.*, pp. 134–136; Scofield, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 283–295.

¹⁹¹ R. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI*, p. 222.

¹⁹² Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

predated his usurpation, for he visited Canterbury in the company of Salisbury and Warwick on the 16 June 1460.¹⁹³ He returned frequently, amongst others in 1461, 1463 and in July 1465, this time accompanied by Queen Elisabeth Woodville and in order to gain indulgences, for they were in Canterbury on the Feast of the Translation of St. Thomas.¹⁹⁴ For the occasion of the wedding of George, duke of Clarence to Anne Neville in June 1469, both the newlyweds and Cecily Neville paid a visit to the shrine.¹⁹⁵

When Margaret first visited Canterbury, she was definitely participating not only in the time-honoured tradition of the English royal family, but also contributing to a growing tradition within the House of York. The visit was, as noted, part of her journey to Burgundy and her wedding in June 1468.¹⁹⁶ The Canterbury monk John Stone, who diligently noted all royal and important visitors to Becket's shrine until 1471, has left us with a vivid description of the pilgrimage, incidentally leaving no doubt as to the reason for the visit, calling it "causa peregrinationis."¹⁹⁷ He writes, "This year there came to Canterbury our lord Edward IV, King of England and France on the day of St. Alban [22 June] . . . and with him was the lord George, duke of Clarence, and the lord William [Richard], duke of Gloucester and the lady Margaret, sister of the said King, with a great many counts and barons and knights. And the next day, on the vigil of St. John the Baptist there was a minor mass for St. John, and a major mass for the octave of Corpus Christi."¹⁹⁸

John Stone had unfortunately died by the time of Margaret's next pilgrimage to Canterbury in 1480, but the archive at Canterbury Cathedral provides another glimpse of Margaret of York on pilgrimage.¹⁹⁹ She stayed with her party outside the town in a large tent, a form of accommodation that she also chose when on pilgrimage

¹⁹³ W. G. Searle, *The Chronicle of John Stone. Monk of Christ Church, Canterbury, 1415-1471*, p. 79. For Edward's other visits see also W. Page (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Kent*, vol. 2, p. 118.

¹⁹⁴ Searle, *op. cit.*, pp. 82ff.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁹⁶ Archives of the City and County of Canterbury, CC/FA 5. Fo.61V. My gratitude goes to Michael Stansfield, archivist at the archives for his kind assistance.

¹⁹⁷ Searle, *op. cit.*, pp. II and VIII.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 103. He goes on to say the Margaret sailed to Burgundy from Margate and that the Bishop of Salisbury officiated at her wedding to Charles, Duke of Burgundy.

¹⁹⁹ Archives of the City and County of Canterbury, CC/FA 6. Fo.7.V.

to Aachen.²⁰⁰ Again Canterbury faced the intrusion of a large company. The bill for the wine, claret, punch, malmsey and meats that the town provided Margaret and her entourage with came to the large sum of £10. The pilgrimages of Margaret of York, whether in England or on the continent, were not small affairs. They were also expensive and not just to the host town. The duchess was in the habit of leaving behind expensive gifts. Unfortunately we do not have any evidence for her donations to St. Thomas. Both shrine and the accounts of donations related to the visits in question have disappeared and Erasmus was too contemptuous to leave us with a list of donors, even though he was in the position to do so.²⁰¹

The devotion to St. Thomas throws some additional light upon Margaret's religious mindset. Although still drawing rather large numbers of visitors, there seems to have been a gradual decline in the veneration at Canterbury.²⁰² Does Margaret's devotion to St. Thomas therefore give credence to the notion that her religiosity was, in the words of Christine Weightman and Blockmans and Prevenier, 'old fashioned'?²⁰³ Perhaps not. Her attraction to the cult of St. Thomas should be regarded as both an expression of a strongly held, familial pattern of devotion and as a participation in a lively religious culture. Traditional pilgrimage centres like Canterbury may have been suffering from newer competition but could still attract plenty of interest despite suffering a reduction in income.²⁰⁴ It was still an almost obligatory stop for continentals travelling in England, and was described in tones of awe by Gabriel Tetzels and Wenceslas Sasek, who travelled in the retinue of the Bohemian ambassador Leo of Rozmítal during 1465.²⁰⁵ Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the future

²⁰⁰ Loersch (ed.), *op. cit.*

²⁰¹ He gives a detailed account of the shrine, adding that the prior "pointed out each jewel by touching it with a white rod, adding its French name, its worth, and the name of the donor". [The italics are mine.] D. Erasmus, "A Pilgrimage for Religions Sake," *Colloquies*, p. 308. Translated by C. R. Thompson.

²⁰² The jubilee of 1420 drew circa 100,000 pilgrims, but thereafter there was certainly a decline. Page, *op. cit.*, p. 58, n. 178. Sumption, who seems to be rather contemptuous of pilgrimage, dismisses the cult as being 'unimportant', which would be far too harsh. Duffy's statement that the shrine was drawing fewer visitors but that it is hard to quantify would appear to be closer to the mark. Sumption, *op. cit.*, p. 273; Duffy, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

²⁰³ Weightman, *op. cit.*, p. 203; Blockmans en prevenier, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

²⁰⁴ C. H. Williams, "The Becket Cult and After," in M. Ramsey et al., *Christian Canterbury*, p. 20.

²⁰⁵ M. Letts, *The Travels of Leo of Rozmítal Through Germany, Flanders, England, France, Spain, Portugal and Italy, 1465-1467*, pp. 44ff.

Pope Pius II, also considered the shrine at Canterbury important enough to pay it a visit.²⁰⁶ In this respect the continued attraction of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, printed twice by Caxton, also indicates the continued popularity of the cult amongst a larger audience.

The pilgrimage activity of Margaret of York lends strong support to the notion that she was indeed a very pious woman. At the same time it also highlights the complex interplay between religion and the expressions of religious sentiment, and the demands of the wider world. Indeed, piety and the world were frequently complementary during Margaret's life. The most striking element to emerge from the evidence is her devotion to the black statues of the Virgin Mary. Traditionally it is assumed that devotion to the Virgin Mary cannot explain either the intensity of, or the reasons for, an individual's adherence to the cult. According to this view, devotion to the Virgin was too omnipresent, her cult too many faceted, her help too often invoked for too wide a variety of problems for the historian to draw any hard conclusions from an individual's devotion to the Mother of God.²⁰⁷ With Margaret, however, we can detect a devotional pattern to one very precise aspect of the Virgin's cult, and one that was particularly appropriate to the childless duchess. It is its appropriateness that also indicates the intensity of her faith.

The unsuitability of the imposition of divisions of 'popular' and 'aristocratic' religion is equally highlighted by Margaret's pilgrimage activity.²⁰⁸ The sister to two English kings, wife to the most powerful duke in Europe and stepmother-in-law of the emperor happily participated in pilgrimages that drew hundreds of thousands of people, as in Aachen, Halle and Canterbury. The nature of the pilgrimages also rebuffs the dismissal of Margaret's piety as conservative and traditional in no uncertain terms. It is true that for most of the pilgrim sites visited by Margaret there were familial precedents, but this is merely another example of how she and most of her contemporaries just did not differentiate between the divine and the profane. All of her pilgrimage destinations also featured highly on the international pilgrimage circuit. Margaret of York could, however,

²⁰⁶ F. A. Gragg and L. C. Gabel (ed.), *The Commentaries of Pius II*.

²⁰⁷ Donald Attwater argued that the cult of the black Virgin had no significance, but failed to support his claim. In the light of evidence from all over Europe, a pattern clearly does emerge. Attwater, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

²⁰⁸ Finucane, *op. cit.*, pp. 195–196.

not have foreseen that pilgrimages were soon to be challenged as being outmoded and indeed irreligious. For most of Margaret's contemporaries, all pilgrimages were a perfectly normal expression of one's faith, neither old-fashioned nor traditionalistic.²⁰⁹

Erasmus was only one of many who soon after Margaret's death would pour scorn on the practice, but this has to be balanced by the vigorous defence of the concept of pilgrimage by Erasmus' friend, the learned and saintly Thomas More.²¹⁰ And pilgrimage was not doomed at the end of the fifteenth century either. It has lasted, with the normal cycle of decline and growth, into our own period. Pilgrimage was an important element of the wider religious culture of late medieval Europe. The duchess of Burgundy and her close circle partook in pilgrimages just as they were interested in new cults, some of which would go on to form the major tools of the Counter-Reformation. She started to use the rosary as its cult grew up in the Low Countries under the impetus of Alanus de la Roche, and her close friend and ally Engelbrecht II of Nassau had the first Stations of the Cross installed near Breda.²¹¹ Margaret's court at Mechelen also supported the spread of the cult of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady.²¹² The duchess' reading included many of the popular mystics of the period, some of whom were to enjoy long careers, like Thomas a Kempis. Here too, Cecily Neville's influence on her daughter may once more be remarked upon, for she was equally at home with the popular mystics of the period.²¹³

That leaves the vexed question of indulgences that could be earned by visiting shrines, traditionally the benchmark by which the depravity

²⁰⁹ Finucane noticed that despite the huge increase in pilgrimage destinations during the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, traditional shrines continued to attract pilgrims. *Ibid.*, pp. 194–195.

²¹⁰ For this and what follows see "Pilgrimages," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, pp. 363–372.

²¹¹ For the rosary see G. Meersseman, "La réforme des couvents d'Ypres et de Bergues-Saint-Winoc 1457–1515," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, vol. VII (1937) pp. 191–202; J.-C. Schmitt, "La confrérie du Rosaire de Colmar (1485)," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, vol. IX (1939) pp. 99–102. For the Stations of the Cross in F. F. X. Cerutti, *De institutione geschiedenis der stad tijdens de Nassau's*, In, F. F. X. Cerutti et al., *Geschiedenis van Breda, vol. I, De Middeleeuwen*, pp. 155–156.

²¹² E. Steenackers, *La Confrérie de Notre-Dame des Sept Douleurs à Malines*, Malines, 1927.

²¹³ W. Blockmans, "The Devotion of a Lonely Duchess," Kren, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–46; Weightman, *op. cit.*, chapter 7; C. A. J. Armstrong, *The Piety of Cicely Neville, Duchess of York*, in, *England, France and Burgundy in the Fifteenth Century*, pp. 141ff.

of the fifteenth-century faithful can be measured from the earliest days of the Reformation. Her pilgrimage to Aachen during the jubilee attest to the fact that Margaret of York was not indifferent to the earning of indulgences and nor should we expect her to be. Once again it is the motivation that should direct the contemporary observer to judge whether an expression of religious sentiment was one of faith or of externalised ritual. In the case of indulgences, there can be little doubt that these were sought because people believed in their usefulness in the afterlife. To use the quest for indulgences on Margaret's part to question the vitality of her faith by dubbing it old fashioned or conventional would herald a return to the indiscriminate dismissal of fifteenth-century piety as moribund, a view that pervaded the writings of the Protestant-inclined historians of a previous generation and one that cannot stand up to scrutiny.²¹⁴

Naturally one cannot reach any concrete conclusions on the range of Margaret of York's religious activities from her pilgrimages alone. For this the literature she read, the religious orders she patronised, her religious background as a child and the contemporary view of the duchess as expressed in books, paintings and illuminations must all be examined. What the pilgrimages do establish beyond reasonable doubt is the depth of Margaret's religious convictions and the strength of late fifteenth-century devotional activity, of which Margaret's are but an example. The religious life of the duchess of Burgundy is therefore one case study where a 'leisured, aristocratic' lady's piety can indeed contribute to a wider understanding of fifteenth-century Catholicism.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ For a bibliographic survey of works on the late medieval Church see P. Heath, "Between Reform and Reformation: the English Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XLI (1990), pp. 647–678.

²¹⁵ Duffy, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

MAPPING FAMILY LINES:
A LATE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY EXAMPLE OF
GENEALOGICAL DISPLAY

Charlotte Bauer-Smith

Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166 is a late fifteenth-century genealogical roll that impressively presents eighty-five individual coats-of-arms for members of the English, French, and Burgundian families (figures 1 and 2).¹ Most likely commissioned for Charles the Bold, the last Valois duke of Burgundy (1467–1477), the roll was produced within the first year of his ducal reign. It is unique because it is not a roll chronicle, but rather a heraldic display in which each person is represented by his/her coat-of-arms and a brief identification in Latin. Text, heraldry, and layout work in conjunction with one another to reinforce consanguineous and marital affiliations while presenting a hierarchical diagram of concurrent kingdoms. A close examination of the visual and textual elements of Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166 reveals how the genealogy's structure reflects Burgundian ambitions in the turbulent political climate of the late fifteenth century.²

The preface—situated at the top of the roll and written in a fifteenth-century Burgundian *lettera batarda*³—explains that the genealogy is a continuation of the royal lineages explained by Vincent of Beauvais in his *Speculum historiale*; and indeed, the Newberry/UIUC manuscript picks up where Vincent left off. It begins with the generation of English and French kings following Louis IX—that is, Edward I of England and Philip III of France—and continues through

¹ I have provided a schematic diagram of Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166, which, hopefully, will be useful for understanding the visual affiliations and general layout in cases where written language is not the most expedient. Numbers in parenthesis and brackets used throughout this paper correlate to those on the diagram.

² I would like to thank Paul Saenger and Barbara Jones for their generous support. Likewise, thanks are due to my advisor, Anne D. Hedeman, as well as Timothy Graham and Kelly DeVries, whose guidance and comments have been indispensable.

³ Alternately termed *Lettre Bourguignonne*, this script was extremely popular for *de luxe* manuscripts written in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. See Michelle Brown, *A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600* (London, 1990), 110–111.

Edward IV and Louis XI, respectively.⁴ But despite its initial reference to Vincent's massive thirteenth-century encyclopedia that tells of the "creation of the world and the origin of the kingdom from the Romans . . . up through the kingdom of the Franks . . .," the roll's prologue ultimately centers on Charles the Bold, whose lineage is paralleled with those of the kings of England and France.⁵ Charles' lineage is said to begin with Pepin the Short, father of Charlemagne and fifth duke of Brabant; his Brabantian lineage is again emphasized in the entry for Philip III, which reads:

Philipp[us] quartus rex francor[um] h[ic] filius s[an]c[t]issimi regis ludouici ex d[omi]na margareta de proui[n]cia reg[n]auit a[n]nis [quattuor] h[ic] bon[us] et benign[us] erat. Et ab isto volumus p[ro]ced[it] genealogia[m] n[ost]ram et a co[n]t[em]p[or]alib[us] suis q[ui] p[ro]t[em]p[or]e sue era[n]t ex q[ui]bus or[t]ib[us] illustrissim[us] pri[n]ceps et domin[us] karolus modernus burgu[n]d[i]a. et braba[n]cie dux linealiter ge[n]itus e[st] vt i[n]fra patebit per descensione[m] linialem.

Philip [the third], king of the Franks, this son of St. Louis by lady Margaret of Provence, reigned for four years; he was good and kind, and from him the roll continues our genealogy, and from his contemporaries, who in his own time, were the roots of the most illustrious prince and lord Charles the present duke of Burgundy and Brabant, [who] was born in lineal succession as will be laid out below by means of a lineal descent.

Unfortunately, however, Charles is not visually represented on Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166 because the roll is now incomplete. The thirteen diagrammatic lines which run off the right-hand side of the roll would have connected to the four Valois dukes of Burgundy, situating them in relation to the French and English kings as well as significant ancestors like William, duke of Holland, Hainault and Zeeland, whose lands the Burgundian dukes acquired in the early fifteenth century. The missing portion must have also displayed the modern arms of Burgundy adopted by Philip the Good in 1430, an armorial that clearly reflects the aggregate nature of the Burgundian state and consolidates the Burgundian duke's various offices into a

⁴ Because Vincent of Beauvais assigned numbers to the kings differently than we know them today, Philip III (#62) is called Philip IV and Philip IV (#64) is labeled Philip V. For the same reason, Louis X (#66) and Louis XI (#78) are described as Louis IX and X, respectively.

⁵ All transcriptions and translations of the text are my own, as are any mistakes.

single shield (figure 3).⁶ Divided into four quadrants, these arms display the French *fleur-de-lis* in the first and fourth quarters marked with a *bordure argent* and *gules*. The second quarter contains the *bendy or* and *azur* of ancient Burgundy and the *sable lion or* of Brabant: the third quarter repeats the ancient arms, but this time is paired with those of Luxembourg, while the escutcheon in the center represents Flanders.

Because Charles the Bold is twice called *karoli moderni burgundie et brabantie* (the present duke of Burgundy and Brabant) on the roll, his father's death on June 15, 1467 provides a *terminus post quem*.⁷ Regardless of Charles' independent political campaign prior to his father's death, the use of this title before that date would have been premature and inappropriate. A *terminus ante quem* is suggested by two factors: the eleventh chapter meeting of the Order of the Golden Fleece in May of 1468 and his marriage to Margaret of York on July 3 of that same year. Charles presided as sovereign of the Order for the first time in May of 1468 and, not surprisingly, the meeting is described as the most elaborate ever, lasting nearly the entire month of May.⁸ Both Edward IV (#28) and Jacques of Bourbon (#58) were inducted into the Order; yet only Charles of Orléans is displayed with the golden collar that, with few exceptions, all members were obliged to wear (figure 4).⁹ Perhaps, then, the roll was made before this meeting even though Edward did not accept his collar until after his sister, Margaret of York, wed Charles.¹⁰ Interestingly, Margaret of

⁶ For heraldry see: Michel Pastoureau, *Les Armoiries. Typologie des sources du Moyen Âges occidental* (Brepols, 1976); J. B. Rietstrap, *Armorial Général précédé d'un Dictionnaire des termes du Blason*, 2 vols. (New York, 1965; reprint of 1884 edition); and V. and H. V. Rolland, *Illustrations to the 'Armorial Générale'*, 3 vols. (London, 1967).

⁷ This phrase occurs once in the prologue and again in the entry above Philip III. See Sandra Hindman, *Les Enluminures*, catalogue no. 4 (Paris and Chicago): 103.

⁸ See: Françoise de Gruben, "Fêtes et cérémonies de la Toison d'or: le chapitre de 1468 à Bruges," *Publications du centre européen d'études bourguignonnes (XIV^e-XVI^e siècles)* 34 (1994): 153-165; F. Salet, "La fête de la Toison d'or de 1468," *Annales de la Société royale d'archéologie de Bruxelles* 51 (1956-1966): 5-29; and F. Salet, "La fête de la Toison d'or et le mariage de Charles le Téméraire. Bruges mai juillet 1468," *Handelingen van het genootschap voor geschiedenis* 106 (1969): 5-16.

⁹ Jacques, brother of Jean the duke of Bourbon and Isabel of Bourbon (Charles the Bold's second wife), was chosen to replace Charles of Orléans, who died in 1465, but Jacques also died shortly after being inducted. In addition to the citation in note 8 above see: D'Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: The Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520* (New York, 1987), 356-396.

¹⁰ See Salet, "La fête . . . et le mariage . . .," 12-13 for Edward's induction. See also: Kervyn de Lettenhove, "Relation du mariage du duc Charles de Bourgogne et de Marguerite d'York," *Bulletin de la commission royale*, 3rd series, X (1867-69): 245ff.

York is neither mentioned, nor represented on the roll, nor is there any line indicating how her arms would have connected to those of her brother. Charles' first two wives, Catherine of France (#84) and Isabel of Bourbon ([#95]), are clearly represented in the genealogy. If Charles had married Margaret of York before the roll was made, it seems likely that her relationship to Edward IV or their parents would have been represented. The roll, then, was probably commissioned and completed between July 15, 1467 and the late spring or summer of 1468.

The size of the roll and quality of the painting suggests that, unlike the fashionable roll chronicles kept in royal and noble libraries, the Newberry/UIUC manuscript may have been intended as a display and was merely stored in roll form for convenience.¹¹ The overall visual structure is also quite different from roll chronicles: where direct family linkages are impossible or impractical, roll chronicles often rely on text to explain lineal disjunction while preserving the myth of a protracted bloodline that reaches back to Christ, Troy, or even Eden. And while roll chronicles occasionally employ heraldry, they more often rely on written names within linked roundels or squares to identify family members. These molecular structures are occasionally interrupted by longer passages of text which elaborate relevant historical or pseudo-historical matters.¹² The Newberry/UIUC roll, on the other hand, utilizes a highly visual means to identify individuals and to establish affiliations, making the text secondary. This is also evident in the order in which the roll was constructed. First, the roundels were laid out along with the vertical ribbons used to delineate the lines of French and English kings. The text was added by a single scribe after this stage, as is evident in the entry

¹¹ The roll measures 1240 mm × 615 mm and is comprised of only two membranes that are butted against one another and joined by three short strips of parchment pasted on the reverse side along the seam. In its present state the upper and lower edges of the roll are stitched to shorter leaders of stiffer parchment that are wrapped around two modern wooden holders. Written in a late medieval hand, the words "*genealogia Angillor[um] [et] francorum*" appear on the back of the upper membrane and probably served as a means of identification for the roll's content. The parchment in this area has darkened from exposure to light and these words are more clearly visible under ultraviolet light. I thank Timothy Graham for helping me to decipher them. The work "*Angillorum*," is particularly difficult to make out; however, this appears to be the correct, albeit unusual, transcription.

¹² See L. Genicot, *Les Généalogies* (Brepols, 1975) for an overview of the genre of genealogy as well as an discussion of how it differs from that of the chronicle. See also: François Fossier, "*Chroniques universelles en forme de rouleau à la fin du Moyen-Age*," *Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France 1980-81* (26 November): 163-183.

for Edward III (#11) where the painter adjusted the ribbon to accommodate the “t” in “*dimicaui*” (figure 5). Next red, blue, and yellow lines were added to connect select members of the royal families. It was during this last stage when the arms were painted and color applied overall.¹³ Not only was the text applied secondarily, but its brevity and positioning make it accessory to the visual elements. Even the longer introductory paragraph wedged between the two descents of French and English kings is a textual shortcut in that it refers to Vincent of Beauvais’ work in order to justify this genealogy’s historical foundation and to gloss over the origins of the bloodline. The roll’s purpose, therefore, could not have been merely to continue Vincent of Beauvais’ *Speculum historiale* as the prologue claims, for it does not relay enough biographical material to operate as a ‘history’ or a pedagogical presentation like the *Speculum historiale* or the *Grandes Chroniques de France*.¹⁴ On the other hand, this type of presentation would hardly seem out of place among the sumptuous displays of the Burgundian court in the fifteenth century, nor with Charles the Bold’s self-aggrandizing character.

The visual layout of the Newberry/UIUC 166 presents two types of historical lineage: one of kingship and one of consanguinity. Kingship is accentuated through the use of two vertically paralleled ribbons and the decoration on these ribbons further emphasizes royal successions through the application of symbolic shields. The blue ribbon joining the English kings contains a repetition of white shields with red crosses associated with Saint George, the patron saint of the Order of the Garter, while the yellow ribbon used for the French kings contains red shields with white crosses referencing Saint Michel, protector of the French kings.¹⁵ For the most part, kings’ and queens’ arms are placed inside of larger roundels and their shields bear a

¹³ Note the large amount of space left in the entry immediately below Charles of Orléans’ roundel in anticipation of the space needed to display his golden collar. Also note the lack of alignment between blocks of text, most apparent with the prologue and first two royal entries, which demonstrates that ruling lines were not used for the text.

¹⁴ See Nathalie Hurel, “*La Chronique universelle d’Orléans: un manuscrit d’histoire enluminée*,” *Histoire de l’Art* 19 (1992): 29–40 and Anne D. Hedeman, *The Royal Image: illustrations of the ‘Grandes Chroniques de France’ 1274–1422* (Berkeley, 1991).

¹⁵ I agree with Sandra Hindman (*op. cit.*), who rightfully notes that the Order of Saint Michel was not established until August of 1469, but that this later date is not problematic given Saint Michel’s prominence with French culture before that time. See Boulton, *op. cit.*, 427–447 for the Order of Saint Michel and Colette Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology: myths and symbols of nation in late-medieval France* (Berkeley, 1991) 188ff. for St. Michel’s symbolic importance in medieval France.

crown, while cadets and secondary members of the royal family occupy smaller roundels.¹⁶ The relationship of lesser family members to royal kin is illustrated by placing the roundels adjacent to one another, as is often the case with queens and brothers, or by joining them with a red, yellow, or blue line used to show filial relationships. These secondary generations, who sometimes ensured the continuation of the royal lineages when no direct heir existed and who were occasionally in the position to lay claim to the crown themselves or bring new territories to its domain, are grouped together and placed within the overall visual format accordingly (figure 6). Thus, the layout vertically illustrates a chronology dictated by generations of kings, while horizontally it reveals bloodlines and the proximity of various individuals to those royal crowns.

Regardless of the actual number of English and French kings between the late thirteenth and late fifteenth century, precisely nine men were selected to delineate the royal lineage of each kingdom. For this reason Edward the Black Prince (#14), who theoretically would have inherited the crown if he had not died before his father, is included among the line of English kings. Although Edward was never king, he is placed among the succession of English rulers and is even given a crown because his inclusion is necessary to illustrate the generational transfer of the patrimony. Edward's shield is distinct in another way: it contains a label of *argent*, a mark used to show rank among royal kin, which is particular to cadets of the royal family.¹⁷ While his label identifies his position as heir to the throne, the crown serves to re-emphasize his hereditary rights, rather than to suggest historical fact. On the French side, the opposite maneuver occurs with the exclusion of the last two Capetian kings, Philip V (#81) and Charles IV (#34), who are shifted to either side of the main line of French rulers. Although both kings reigned briefly after the death of their eldest brother, Louis X, neither had an heir; thus, Louis alone is able to represent the last generation of Capetian rulers. Moreover, neither is directly identified in the text as a king, but

¹⁶ The exceptions are: Edward, the Black Prince (#14), the wives of Charles IV (#33 and #35), the wife of Philip V (#82), Charles of Orléans (#55), Katherine, queen of Castile (#36), and Philippa, queen of Portugal (#37).

¹⁷ For rules of heraldry, including marks of differencing for cadency, see: Arthur Fox-Davies, *The Art of Heraldry: An Encyclopaedia of Armory* (New York and London, 1904); *Boutell's Heraldry*, revised by J. P. Brooke-Little, Richmond Herald of Arms (London, 1973 edition); and Marvin H. Pakula, *Heraldry and Armor of the Middle Ages* (South Brunswick and New York, 1972).

rather as son of the king, and as having reigned after a brother. Even this information is offered secondarily; whereas Louis is identified as the first-born son of the King Philip IV.

Karolus comes marchie filius ph[ilipp]i pulcri regis francor[um] regnauit post fratrem suu[m] ludouicum et decessit sine heredibus.

Charles, count of Marche, the son of Philip the Fair, king of the Franks, reigned after his brother Louis and died without heirs.

Ph[ilipp]e comes pictaue filius ph[ilipp]i pulcre reg[is] fra[n]cor[um] regnauit p[ost] f[rat]rem suu[m] karolu[m] et obiit sine he[re]dib[us] masculinis

Philip, count of Poitiers, son of Philip the Fair, king of the Franks; he reigned after his brother Charles and died without male heirs.

Ludouicus non[us] d[i]ct[us] hustim primoge[n]itus dicti regis ph[ilipp]i pulcri reg[n]auit a[n]nis duob[us] et obiit sine heredib[us]

Louis [X], called the Stubborn, first-born child of Philip called the Good; he reigned for two years and died without heirs.

Each of these three kings occupies a larger roundel, but the younger brothers' queens (#33, 35, and 82)—insignificant for their inability to produce surviving heirs, yet queens nonetheless—are placed inside smaller roundels with crowns.

Such a deliberate calculation of generations might suggest that the roll was created to demonstrate seven generations of separation between Charles the Bold and Margaret of York in order to satisfy the Church. Arrangements for this union were informally agreed to early in the autumn of 1467 and Edward IV announced his sister's marriage to the English Parliament on 17 May 1468, dates well within the parameters of the roll's commission. Even so, Margaret's absence remains somewhat curious.¹⁸ In theory, separation of the bloodlines could be proven merely by drawing out Edward IV's lineage since the two are the same; however, thirty-four of the eighty-five individuals represented on the roll are women. Not only is the inclusion of women fairly high,

¹⁸ For marriage arrangements see Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (New York, 1973): 46ff. See also H. Kervyn de Lettenhove, "Relations du mariage . . .," *op. cit.*

but this genealogy tends to emphasize female linkages and, because of this, one would expect to find either Margaret's arms or a line that would have linked up with them on the extant portion of the roll.

Marriage alliances are undoubtedly emphasized due to the fact that they were so crucial in the formation of the Burgundian state.¹⁹ While Philip the Bold received the duchy of Burgundy in 1364 from John the Good after the death of Philip de Rouvres, the last Capetian duke of Burgundy, it was his marriage to Margaret of Flanders that brought him Flanders as well as Artois, Rethel, Nevers, and the county of Burgundy. A century later, his grandson Philip the Good, acquired Holland, Hainault, Zeeland, Brabant, Limbourg, and, briefly, Luxembourg, primarily as the result of well-arranged marriages.²⁰ Marriage affiliations are visually accentuated on the Newberry/UIUC roll through the use of heraldry and particularly the practice of marshaling women's arms, in which the woman's shield is divided *palewise* (lengthwise) to display her father's arms on one half and her husband's on the other.²¹ If a woman was not heir to the patrimony, then this arrangement was temporary, with the result that only her husband's arms would be passed on to their children. If, however, she inherited the patrimony then the marshaling was permanent and her children would also inherit the marshaled arms because, like the patrimony, a coat-of-arms was inalienable.²² In this way, women's

¹⁹ I use "state" for convenience here, but fully acknowledge, as does Richard Vaughan, the terms shortcomings and inaccuracy.

²⁰ Richard Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy* (London, 1975), especially chapter two, 14–30.

²¹ For example, Catherine of France's (#84) arms display the Burgundian arms on one half and France's arms on the other. (See figure 7.) In practice there are three ways to marshal a women's arms (joining by dimidiation, impaling, and quartering): Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166 contains examples of all three. A woman's arms generally do not have marks of cadency except in cases where the label was inherited with her father's arms. In such cases, the cadency mark can also be used by her husband. See Fox-Davies, *op. cit.*, 340–45 and *Boutell's Heraldry*, *op. cit.*, 130ff.

²² The majority of women's arms on the Newberry roll are joined by dimidiation or are impaled to reveal both their husband's and their father's tenurial rights. Examples of this type of temporary marshaling include Jeanne of Bourbon (#73), who married Charles V (#72) and is therefore able to display both the arms of France and Bourbon. But because she was not heir to the duchy of Bourbon, these arms are not transferred to her children. Instead, we can trace the line of Bourbon dukes by finding their arms in the middle of the roll (#s 44, 51, 59). See Arthur Charles Fox-Davies, *op. cit.*, 381ff. See also *Boutell's Heraldry*, revised by J. P. Brooke-Little, Richmond Herald of Arms (London *op. cit.*, 1973 edition) 131, which states: "... the lawful possessor of arms does not possess any right or power to alienate them ... and the inheritance of arms is restricted to heirs who are lineally descended from the first lawful possessor of those arms."

arms could be an efficient system for denoting marital affiliations, especially for later offspring who did not directly inherit land or a title but who could still demonstrate proximity through consanguinity. Had the artist simply drawn generic portraits or merely written names within the roundels, as is commonly done on roll chronicles, the emphasis on alliances and land holdings would not be as immediately obvious to the viewer.

Another expedient method that visually distinguishes bloodlines is the employment of the yellow, blue, and red lines used to connect offspring and spouses who are juxtaposed with kin placed elsewhere on the roll. These lines follow a prescribed system of signification regarding place: yellow denotes Hainault, Holland and Zeeland, blue is used for France and Burgundy, and red for England.²³ The color of each line is determined by the position of the older party, thereby clearly indicating ancestral linkages (figure 1). For example, the yellow line connecting to Philippa (#12) must have connected to William, duke of Holland, Hainault, and Zeeland [#88], thus indicating where the two bloodlines merged, which, in this case, shows a union between England and Flanders exactly seven generations back in time.

Yet, while the roll may have operated in part to demonstrate the appropriate distance between two family bloodlines, it contains an inordinate amount of information that strongly reflects both the composite nature of the Burgundian territories and Charles the Bold's political agenda. Unlike the kings of France and England who ruled their lands under a single title, the Burgundian dukes did not: as Richard Vaughan points out, "[Philip the Good] was duke of Burgundy in Dijon, count of Burgundy in Dole, count of Flanders in Ghent, a duke in Brabant, a count only in Holland, a mere lord in Malines."²⁴ As already noted, the modern arms of Burgundy, adopted by Philip the Good, visually construe the dukes' compilation of titles into a single office, an office which both Philip and Charles sought to elevate by reclaiming the ancient crown of Lotharingia. But justification for a new kingdom presented certain problems, not the least of which was that many of the Burgundian territories were arguably part of either the French domain or the Empire.

²³ These lines also highlight siblings within groupings by creating a bar above the siblings' roundels as in the case of #'s 13–17; #'s 22–24; #'s 26–28; #'s 40–41; #'s 57–59; #'s 85, 98 and 85.

²⁴ Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy*, 196.

Achieving independence from the Valois kings of France was a tricky maneuver considering that in 1364 the duchy was awarded to Philip the Bold, youngest son of John II, a Valois king of France. However, the duchy had come under John's jurisdiction through his blood relation to the last Capetian duke of Burgundy, Philip de Rouvre, who died in 1361 without an heir.²⁵ Thus, rights of inheritance rather than the rights of the crown secured Burgundy's future, yet the status and nature of the duchy was debated throughout the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. French jurists refer to Burgundy as an apanage for the first time in a charter of 1378 and again one century later, arguing for the inalienability of apanages as part of Louis XI's aggressive policy to restore royal authority over territories he wished to retain.²⁶ In the meantime, Philip and Charles negotiated with Frederick III to grant the Burgundian dukes a kingdom comprised of Burgundian lands within the Empire, a scheme that ultimately resulted in Charles' death at Nancy in 1477. Until that moment, however, the dukes' were undaunted and the Newberry/UIUC roll favors the dukes' highest political ambitions. Not only does the vertical axis created by the alignment of the kings of England and France immediately set up a strong visual parallel between the two kingdoms (and possibly the a third parallel with Burgundians on the lost portion), but the author of the roll's prologue also suggests a correlation between three royal lines when he writes:

In q[u]a p[arte] perseriem linear[um] nobi litate[m] magnificu[m]
d[omi]nor[um] principu[m] regu[m] et ducu[m] quantum de origine
regnor[um] fra[n]cor[um] anglor[um] et partib[us] n[ost]ror[um] . . . illus-
trissimi pri[n]cipis et metuendissimi d[omi]ni. d[omi]ni karoli moderni
burgu[n]die et braba[n]t[ie] duc[is] excelle[n]tissimi cui[us] nobilissima
p[ro]pago ex singulis ramis ortu[m] habet.

In this part, I continue with the noble and magnificent line of lords, princes, kings, and dukes as far as the origin of the kingdoms of the

²⁵ See Paul Saenger, "Burgundy and the Inalienability of Appanages in the Reign of Louis XI," in *French Historical Studies* vol. X, no. 1 (Spring 1977): 1–26, especially page twelve where he writes: "Louis XI's arguments were made in the face of considerable documentation detrimental to his case. The charter by which King John, in 1363, had united Burgundy to the crown specifically stated that the king's claim was not through the crown but as the closest blood heir through a female connection." See also: Andrew Lewis, "Capetian Appanages and the nature of the French kingdom," *Journal of Medieval History* 2 (1976): 119–134.

²⁶ See Lewis, "Capetian Appanages . . .," *op. cit.*, and Paul Saenger, "Burgundy . . .," *op. cit.*, 3.

Franks, of the English, and of our parts . . . the most illustrious prince and feared lord, our present Lord Charles, the most excellent duke of Burgundy and Brabant, whose progeny, from a single shooting branch has its beginning.

In addition to these visual and textual cues which emphasize royal lines and familial proximity to them, the titles written above each coat-of-arms provide another means of tracking inheritance and claims to territory. The kings' brief biographical entries vary considerably in length and detail, the shortest being Henry VI's entry (#21) which aptly reads: *He[n]ricus sext[us] rex anglor[um] fili[us] henrici qui[n]ti. (Henry the sixth, king of England, the son of Henry the fifth)*. Most others are somewhat longer and typically begin by identifying the person, his parentage, whether he came to the throne by inheritance or usurpation, the date he died, and whether or not he had any surviving heirs. The very first two entries, those of Edward I and Philip III, are exceptional in that they elaborate on the purpose for this specific genealogical record.²⁷ Likewise, there is variation within the titular formulae used for the secondary family members; overall, however, these entries are even more succinct than the kings'. The shortest (#31) simply reads: *Petrus dux burbonii (Peter, duke of Bourbon)*, and is atypical because it does not describe his ancestry or filial connections. Others, like the brothers of Edward the Black Prince (#s 13, 15–17) are much more specific regarding peerage. Take for example number sixteen which reads: *Ioh[ann]is de ga[n]dauo t[er]cius ge[n]it[us] regis eduardi tercii [et] dux la[n]castrie (John of Gaunt, the third son of King Edward III, and duke of Lancaster)*. The case of Edward III's sons is particular in that the exact rank is given for each because these brothers figured repeatedly into disputes over hereditary rights throughout the subsequent century. Edmund's entry (#13) reads: *Edmu[n]d[us] de langelia quarto*

²⁷ The entry above Edward I reads: *Edwardus primus his filius henrici te[r]tii reg[is] anglor[um] genit[us] ex maria de prouincia. No[t]andu[m] q[uod] [quattu]or. fuer[an]t filie comitis prou[n]cie et om[n]es regine. prima et a[n]tiquior regina cecilie karoli regis vxor fratris sanctissimi ludouici vxor. Secunda margareta regina francie sanctissimi ludouici vxor. Tercia regina a[n]glie hui[us] Eduwardi mater. et quarta regina alemanie regis vxor qui et auu[n]culus erat istius regis eduardi.*

This Edward I was the son of Henry III, king of the English by Maria of Provence. It should be noted that there were four daughters of one count of Provence and they were all queens. The first and eldest was the queen of Lorraine, wife of King Charles, brother of Saint Louis; the second queen was Margaret, queen of France, wife of Saint Louis; the third was queen of England, she was the mother of this Edward; and the fourth was queen of Germany and the wife of the king who was the uncle of this king Edward.

genit[us] regis eduardi tercii hic dux eboraci (Edmund of Langley, the fourth child of King Edward III, the duke of York): although merely the fourth son, his roundel is singled out by being placed on the far right in order to facilitate a visual connection with the Yorkist line below.

Andrew Lewis observes that titles indicating filial relationships may have been titles of tenurial right and, as such, seem to have been employed selectively depending on the order of business at hand.²⁸ Princes who were able to state a close blood relationship in their titles, often chose to do so only in affairs pertaining directly to the crown or the royal princes. Through claims of consanguinity, first generation princes were able to designate themselves as heirs to their fathers' territories. First generation Capetian princes called themselves "son of the King of France" after their fathers' deaths, when they also received their apanages.²⁹

But the heir to the 'Son of the King of France' was the son's *primogenitus*: Robert of Clermont was 'Son of the King of France, Count of Clermont,' but Robert's heir, Louis, was 'Eldest son of the Count of Clermont, lord of Bourbon,' until succeeding his father when he had full title merely as count.³⁰

This practice, which occurred in Northern France during the thirteenth century and continued among the Valois princes, implies that

[t]he first generations of apanaged princes thus held their lands as kings' sons . . . but their sons succeeded them as sons and heirs of the fathers, or as king's grandsons. The changes in the family groupings transformed the character of the holdings, making them no longer the apanages of cadets but the patrimonies of heirs.³¹

In the same manner, women who could designate themselves as "daughter of" were able to show rights to a dowry, another curiosity regarding Margaret's absence. Lewis also notes the importance of visual modes of identification for contemporary second generation princes, who unlike first generation princes did not use "son" in their titles, but instead, relied on visual means to state their relationship to the crown by incorporating the *fleur-de-lis* on their arms when "son" became synonymous with "heir".³² In this case, by combining

²⁸ See Andrew Lewis, *Royal Succession in Capetian France: Studies in Familial Order and the State* (Cambridge, MA and London: 1981) especially 161–192.

²⁹ Lewis, *op. cit.*, 170 and note 77.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, note 78.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 170–171.

³² *Ibid.*

two systems of identification—heraldry and titular formulae—the roll records not only consanguineous and marital affiliations, but also records how territories passed through these channels.

While the Newberry/UIUC genealogy reflects Charles' highest political ambitions; its elements also resonate with more immediate incidents occurring throughout 1467 and 1468 when the roll was produced. Several events during this short period could justify a pre-occupation with genealogy and are reflected on the diagrammatic layout. It is impossible to assign the roll to one occasion exclusively; however, it is clear that the roll's composition reflects the contemporary state of affairs by stressing select hereditary rights and alliances. On July 15, 1467, when Philip the Good died, Charles was in Ghent but traveled to Bruges for his father's funeral.³³ Thirteen days later, on June 28, he returned to Ghent and was inaugurated at the Church of St. John as the count of Flanders. The occasion took a turn for the worse the following evening when during an annual festival in honor of a local saint, the celebrants became somewhat rowdy and proceeded to demolish a booth in the cornmarket used to collect the *quellote*.³⁴ Charles tried to put an end to the disruption, but as the crowd yelled, "Down with the *quellote*!" he lost his temper and struck one of the citizens. The situation worsened and the crowd responded by demanding rights denied them since Philip the Good put down the rebellion there in 1453. Charles and his daughter Mary managed to leave on July 1, but not without promising concessions and, although the situation was brought under control, his authority in Ghent remained questionable until the end of 1468.³⁵ Other inaugural ceremonies in Artois, Antwerp, and Malines were similarly ill-fated and Brabant proved especially difficult: according to Chastelain, the citizens of Brabant might have refused to accept Charles as duke, in favor of John, count of Nevers, first cousin Philip the Good. John was the youngest son of John the Fearless who inherited the counties of Nevers and Rethel and had made claims on Brabant in 1464 after the death of his elder brother. In 1465, before the Estates General of Burgundian Netherlands, Charles presented John's involvement in the War of the Public Weal in which he had aided the French king, as an act of disloyalty against the Burgundian

³³ Herman vander Linden, *Itinéraires de Charles, Duc de Bourgogne, Marguerite d'York et Marie de Bourgogne, 1467–1477* (Brussels, 1036), 1.

³⁴ Vaughan, *op. cit.*, 6ff.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

state. On April 27, 1465, John was ordered to restore the Somme towns to Burgundy and renounce his claim to Brabant,³⁶ and Charles was declared the 'sole and undisputed heir of his father Philip'.³⁷ Interestingly, John, who was also expelled at the eleventh meeting of the Order of the Golden Fleece, is nowhere indicated on the surviving portion of the roll, even though his sisters are.³⁸

Just as things were calming down in Brabant, Charles the Bold's attention was diverted to the escalating conflict in Liège where local citizens had overthrown the prince-bishop, Louis of Bourbon, the only ecclesiastical family member included in the genealogy.³⁹ Louis is grouped together with his brothers Jacques and John of Bourbon—and John's wife, Jeanne of France (#s 58–60). A blue line connects the three brothers to their parents, Charles of Bourbon (#51) and Agnes of Burgundy (#52). Intersecting this connection is another blue line that must have linked up with their sister, Isabel of Bourbon ([#95]), Charles the Bold's second wife, on the additional genealogical display. Although the textual entry for Jeanne of France, who is grouped with the pro-Burgundian brothers, identifies her as the daughter of Charles VII, it does not explain that she is also Louis XI's sister, nor is there any visual link drawn to her father or her brother (figure 7).⁴⁰ In this way the roll explicitly accentuates allegiances to the Burgundian duke, while consanguineous affiliations with the French kings are blatantly negated.

This selective isolation is particularly apparent in Louis XI's case because no one except his wife, Charlotte of Savoy, is associated with him. Even his other siblings, Charles of Aquitaine (#85), Catherine of France (#84), and another sibling indicated by the blue line labeled [#98] (perhaps Yoland of Savoy) are linked with their father, Charles

³⁶ Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good* (New York, 1970), 378.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 378–89 and note 3 on 378.

³⁸ de Gruben, *op. cit.*, 160 for the Charles the Bold's commission for Pierre Coustain to paint arms for his meeting and the removal of Jacques's arms from the church of Notre-Dame in Bruges; Kervyn de Lettenhove, *La Toison d'Or* (Brussels, 1097) 39, and Salet, "La fête . . .," *op. cit.*, 14.

³⁹ vander Linden, *op. cit.*; Walter Preveniers and Wim Blochman, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (London and New York), 381; and Louis Prosper Garchard, *Documents inédits*, t. I, 168, 169, 180, 182–83, 188–91, and 190 for letters concerning the Battle of Brustem, reinstatement of the Bishop of Liège, and the assembly of the Estates de Flandres.

⁴⁰ Other women on the roll are identified in this way. Mary of Luxembourg (#33) is described as: *Soror ioh[ann]is regis bohemie, [prim]a vxor/sister of John, king of Bohemia, first wife [of Charles IV of France]*. Elsewhere on the roll, sisters are positioned adjacent to their male siblings.

VII, but are pushed off to the side in such a way that they circumvent Louis XI in favor of Charles the Bold. In no way is Louis given the prestige or power of lordship over the duke, a sentiment reflected in the letter Charles wrote to Louis informing him of his father's death in which he neglected to address Louis as his sovereign.⁴¹

Therefore, if displayed publicly, the roll would have communicated both royal and localized power struggles. In the tradition of the Valois dukes, Charles the Bold's inaugural ceremonies have been described as some of the most magnificent and spectacular events by the chroniclers who recorded them: it is not unreasonable to imagine how such a splendid display of ancestral arms would have bolstered Charles legitimacy and power in this context.⁴² Genealogies of one sort or another were commonly part of such events: take, for example, the Tree of Gold adorned with the arms of Burgundian ancestors displayed as part of Charles the Bold's wedding festivities in 1468 or the numerous literary *advertisements* and epics which employ genealogy as a means of defining "True Nobility."⁴³ Chastelain's *Advertissement au duc Charles*, presented to him during his troubles in Ghent, was designed to remind Charles of the true meaning of nobility and urged him to exercise moderation in his dealings with the town. In this light, the possibility arises that the Newberry/UIUC roll was designed as a gift to be presented to Charles in an attempt to win his favor. If so, the designer was savvy enough to construe carefully an ideal network that would easily appeal to the duke and clearly demonstrate loyalty to him. Yet whether commissioned for Charles or by him, this roll is certainly not the only instance of a visual genealogy serving as political propaganda. In the earlier half of the fifteenth century, a pictorial genealogy illustrating the descent of Henry VI from Saint Louis was posted in churches throughout northern France

⁴¹ Plancher, *Histoire de Bourgogne*, vol. 4, p. ccliii, CXCVIII, June 19, 1467.

⁴² For the recent scholarship on Burgundian ceremonies in Ghent, see: Peter Arnade, *Realms of Ritual, Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late Medieval Ghent* (Ithaca and London, 1996).

⁴³ Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy*, *op. cit.*, 179; M. de Barante, *Histoire des ducs de Bourgogne* (Paris, 1860) especially vol. 6. For use of genealogy in literature during this period, see: Charity Cannon Willard, "The Concept of True Nobility at the Burgundian Court," *Studies in the Renaissance* 14 (1967): 33–48; R. Howard Bloch, *Etymologies and Genealogies: A Literary Anthropology of the French Middle Ages* (Chicago, 1983); Genicot, *Les Généalogues*, *op. cit.*; Donald Maddox, *Fictions of Identity in Medieval France* (Cambridge, UK: 2000); and, last but not least, Gabrielle Spiegel, "Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historical Narrative," *History and Theory* 22 (1983): 43–53.

with an accompanying poem.⁴⁴ Commissioned in 1423 by the duke of Bedford, this medieval 'poster', as J. W. McKenna terms it, visually defended Henry VI's claim to the French throne.⁴⁵ Sydney Anglo, who has compiled a list of additional examples of propagandistic English genealogies, notes the proliferation of elaborate genealogical rolls produced in the fifteenth century.⁴⁶ "This [proliferation]," the author claims, "may have been due to the uncertainty engendered by the rivalry of Henry VI, Richard, Duke of York and Edward IV, and partly may be interpreted as the development of a paper chivalry which grew as the feudal bases of society became increasingly remote and ineffective."⁴⁷ For Charles the Bold, tension between the waning feudal structures and the emergence of the state is apparent in the Burgundian dukes' consanguineous claim to an ancient crown that no longer existed.

Bernard Guenée notes, "the fact that neither the States nor the subjects of the dukes of Burgundy had a common name was more of a threat to Charles the Bold than the policies of Louis XI."⁴⁸ While France could draw on myths of a national identity, Charles had very different obstacles to overcome. Under the leadership of the Valois dukes, Burgundy became relatively more cohesive in that a common currency, a parliament and a *chambre de comptes* were instituted, but even these were institutional changes which did not forge a common identity like that of a people joined by one crown and a common language. The roll's prologue does not use a title to describe the Burgundian state, but instead employs the phrase "*partibus nostrorum*" to distinguish it from the kingdoms of England and France, an indication of Guenée's assessment.

Although Latin was prevalent throughout the fifteenth century, its use on the roll raises a few noteworthy points. First of all, whoever

⁴⁴ J. W. McKenna, "Henry VI of England and the Dual Monarchy: Aspects of Royal Political Propaganda, 1422-32," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* vol. 28 (1965): 151-55 and B. J. H. Rowe, "King Henry VI's Claim to France in Picture and Poem," *The Library*, 4th ser., vol. XIII, no. 1 (June 1932): 77-88.

⁴⁵ Today two copies survive, one in B. M. Shrewsbury MS. Royal 15 E. VI. on folio 3, and another in Cambridge University Library MS. L1.V.20 on folios 33v and 34 r.

⁴⁶ Sydney Anglo, "The British History in Early Tudor Propaganda With an Appendix of Manuscript Pedigrees of the Kings of England, Henry VI to Henry VIII," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* (1962): 17-48.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁸ Bernard Guenée, *States and Rulers in Later Medieval Europe*, trans. by Juliet Vale (Oxford and New York, 1985), 51.

designed the genealogy was familiar enough with Latin to transcribe and possibly translate the entries from whatever sources were used. Second, because the numbers are recorded in a variety of notational systems—some using Arabic numerals, some Roman—this person probably collected information from more than one source and would have needed access to a library or sufficient records.⁴⁹ Third, while the visual elements might have been legible to a broad audience, the text was targeted toward a more learned one. Whether the roll was created by royal administrations on Charles' behalf or by local administrators wishing to impress him, the use of Latin has advantages for the Burgundian court. Its neutrality preferenced neither French nor Netherlandish nor German speaking territories and, in this way, eliminated the contrast between them, focusing instead on their common ruler.

According to C. A. J. Armstrong, Charles' policy on language generally accommodated regional differences. When dissatisfied with the time required to translate Netherlandish documents into French, Charles did not require that the documents be sent to him in French, instead he preferred to elect officials to his own court who were bilingual in Netherlandish and French.⁵⁰ Although the Valois dukes preferred French to Netherlandish, local counties were allowed to conduct administrative assemblies in their own language. In 1430, Philip the Good stipulated in his accession oath that the chancellor of Brabant know Latin, French, and Netherlandish and in that order.⁵¹ Likewise, notaries were often requested to translate from vernacular languages into Latin, a fact which might account for the unusual spelling of English names used on the Newberry roll.⁵² Latin would have been understood by the various officials and administrators working within the Burgundian territories as well as an international and/or clerical audience if used to demonstrate degrees of separation or inheritance claims. Interestingly, most contemporary roll chronicles

⁴⁹ For example, the entry for Edward the Black Prince displays the date of his death using all Arabic numerals with a *punctus* between each. It is the only one written this way. Others use a combination of abbreviations and Arabic numerals; while some mix Roman numerals with abbreviations; a few use Roman numerals exclusively. Additionally the use of the *punctus* varies within each type. This suggests both multiple sources and scribal license.

⁵⁰ C. A. J. Armstrong, *England, France and Burgundy in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1983), 202.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 199 and note 2 on that page.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 191. "Ridsardus" and "Eduwardus" are particularly strange.

listed in the duke's inventories were written in vernacular languages.⁵³ A genealogy of the kings of France said to show marriages and alliances beginning with Saint Louis and ending with John of Bavière, bishop of Liège in 1407, is recorded as written in French.⁵⁴ Other items written in French include several sixteenth-century *armoires* of kings and sovereigns as well as a *chronologie et généalogie des Rois de France*, commissioned by Philip the Good for Charles and described as having "*magnifique lettrines bouclées et armoires*."⁵⁵ Of course, copies of the *Speculum historiale* were owned, and still produced in the fifteenth century, in Latin and in French.⁵⁶ My point however, is two-fold: first that Latin suggests a particular audience, even if we do not know who that audience was; and second, in the case of the Burgundians, it conveniently sidestepped the fact that there was not a unifying language.

Thus, whether created for or on behalf of the last Burgundian duke, Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166 reflects both Charles the Bold's political aspirations and the immediate state of affairs in the Burgundian realm by means of an overlapping combination of diagrammatic and symbolic cues. Most likely displayed at one of Charles' lavish ceremonies in the first year of his ducal reign but before his marriage to Margaret of York, the genealogy demonstrates Charles' noble lineage through both male and female ancestors, and thus highlights the female members of the family—an emphasis that was advantageous to the Burgundians, but that would have been inconceivable in a French demonstration of their own kings. Paralleled with the kings of England and France, Charles is both held up to the noblest standards and is equally worthy of his crown. But the modes of visual and textual language—layout, heraldry, titular formulae—also

⁵³ See Marchal's *Catalogue des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Royale des ducs de Bourgogne* (Brussels, 1843). Two examples dating to the second third of the fourteenth century, #15653 and #15654 armorial genealogies of the dukes of Brabant and Holland respectively, are both in Flemish (see vol. I, 314). Additionally, all manuscripts associated with Charles the Bold's *Joyeuse Entrée* are in Flemish.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. II, #11139.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. I, 98–100 and vol. II, #9949.

⁵⁶ Marchel item #9146, vol. II, is a copy of the *Speculum historiale* from 1450. Although Vincent composed this work in Latin, a French edition was ordered by Jeanne of Burgundy in 1344. The translation was undertaken by Jean de Vignay and was given the title *Miroir Historial*, #1577. See also: Claudine A. Chavannes-Mazel's essay, "Expanding Rubrics for the Sake of Layout: Mise-en-Page as Evidence for a Particular Scribe?" *Medieval Book Production Assessing the Evidence*, ed. Linda Brownrigg (Oxford: Red Gull Press, 1990), 117ff.

disclose the duke's insurmountable problem: a consanguineous claim to a kingdom that no longer existed. Although his heraldry articulates the key land holdings that would comprise his much coveted kingdom, the geographic range can only be described as "*partibus nostrorum*" as stated in the prologue; yet the carefully selected and well planned juxtaposition of textual and visual aspects of Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166 creates an entangled, illusory web of legitimization.

*Legend for Schematic Diagram of Newberry/UIUC Ms. 166**

LEFT:

1. [Eleanor], countess of Bar
2. Edward, duke of York
3. Richard, earl of Cambridge
4. Richard, duke of York
5. Munfrid, duke of Gloucester
6. Thomas, duke of Clarence

ENGLAND:

7. Edward I
8. [Eleanor of Castile, countess of Ponthieu]
9. Edward II
10. Isabelle
11. Edward III
12. Philippa of Hainault
13. Edmund of Langley
14. Edward of Woodstock
15. Lionel of Antwerp
16. John of Gaunt
17. Thomas of Woodstock
18. Richard II
19. Henry IV
20. Henry V
21. Henry VI
22. Margareta

* Titles are given as they appear on the roll. { } brackets suggest corrections and [] brackets offer names and/or titles not included on the roll.

23. [Yolanda, duchesse of Lorraine and Bar]
24. John, duke of Calabria
25. [wife of #24, mother of #54]
26. [Richard], duke of Gloucester
27. [George], duke of Clarence
28. Edward IV

MIDDLE:

29. Charles, count of Valois
30. [?Katherina of Courtenay]
31. Peter, duke of Bourbon
32. Elisabeth (Isabelle)
33. [?Mary of Luxembourg]
34. Charles, count of Marche
35. [?Blanche of Burgundy]
36. [Katherine] queen of Castile and Leon
37. [Philippa], queen of Portugal
38. Louis, duke of Bourbon
39. Anna of Auvergne
40. Robert, duke of Anjou {should be Louis I}
41. John, duke of Berry
42. Jeanne of Armagnac
43. Charles, duke of Anjou {should be Louis II}
44. John, duke of Bourbon and Auvergne
45. Mary of Berry
46. Louis of Orléans
47. [Valentina Visconti]
48. John, duke of Bedford
49. Anna [of Burgundy]
50. René of Jerusalem and Lorraine
51. Charles, duke of Bourbon and Auvergne
52. Agnes [of Burgundy]
53. Edward, prince of Wales
54. Nicolas of Calabria and Lotharingia
55. Charles, duke of Orléans
56. [?Mary of Cleves]
57. Louis, bishop of Liège
58. Jacques of Bourbon
59. John, duke of Bourbon
60. [Jeanne of France]

FRANCE:

61. [Isabella], queen of Aragon and Navarre
62. Philip IV {actually Philip III}
63. Mary of Brabant
64. Philip the Fair, the Fifth {actually Philip IV}
65. Mary of Champagne {should be Jeanne of Navarre}
66. Louis IX {actually Louis X}
67. Philip, count of Valois
68. [Jeanne] of Burgundy
69. Jeanne, countess of Auvergne and Boulogne
70. John [II]
71. Bonne [of Luxembourg]
72. Charles V
73. [Jeanne of Bourbon]
74. Charles VI
75. [Isabeau of Bavaria]
76. Charles VII
77. Mary of Anjou
78. Louis X {actually Louis XI}
79. [Charlotte of Savoy]

RIGHT:

80. Louis, count of Evreux
81. Philip, count of Poitiers
82. [Jeanne of Burgundy]
83. Michelle [of France]
84. Catherine [of France]
85. Charles, duke of Aquitaine and Guyenne

LINES RUNNING OFF RIGHT EDGE:

- [86.] [?Elisabeth (Isabelle), wife of John I of Holland or Margaret, wife of John II of Brabant]
- [87.] [Philip, king of Navarre, son of Louis of Evreux]
- [88.] [William, duke of Holland, Hainault, and Zeeland]
- [89.] [?Jean of Beaufort, married Margaret of Holland]
- [90.] [Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy]
- [91.] [John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, or his wife, Margaret of Bavaria]
- [92.] [Isabelle, wife of Philip the Good, mother of Charles the Bold]

- [93.] [?child of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy and Michelle of France]
- [94.] [?child of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy and Michelle of France]
- [95.] [Isabelle of Bourbon]
- [96.] [?child of Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy and Catherine of France]
- [97.] [?child of Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy and Catherine of France]
- [98.] [?Yolande of France, wife of duke of Savoy]

RAISING THE GOOD WIFE: MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND*

Candace Gregory

Maids must be wives and mothers to fulfill
The entire and holiest end of woman's being.
Fanny Kemble (1809–1893), "Woman's Heart"

The good wife is far more precious than jewels.
Proverbs 31:10

In the fifteenth century a poem later entitled by editors *How the Good Wyf Taughte Hir Doughtir* became very popular, along with other texts designed to advise parents on the rearing of children. Commonly viewed by historians as mere etiquette guides, texts such as this poem were in fact much more than that. *How the Good Wyf Taughte Hir Doughtir* helped to fashion the identities of women, as they moved between their myriad roles in medieval English society: daughters, wives, mothers, employers, merchants, and so forth. *How the Good Wyf Taughte Hir Doughtir* shaped female identities, transmitted values to women, as well as reflecting the standards of the society. Above all, the poem reveals that medieval European society recognized motherhood as one of most important roles women had in society. It was a society that restricted, prescribed, and devalued women's lives in comparison to the lives of men, yet a woman's role as mother was respected, honored, even sanctified. It is not just that medieval people viewed motherhood as the most significant function women performed; it was respected in much more general terms. Motherhood was a relationship that was essential to everyone's life: one is either born of a mother or is both born of and becomes one. Christ, for instance, had a human mother but not a human father: was it perhaps inconceivable for him to be motherless? Even devoted misogynists

* I would like to express my thanks to everyone at the Richard III Society Fifteenth-Century Studies Conference, 2001, for their helpful comments on the original version of this paper. In particular I wish to thank conference organizer Sharon Michalove, who pointed me in the direction of several useful sources.

defended mothers as worthy of respect, if only because every man except Adam came from the womb of a woman.¹

Motherhood also became a trope, which was applied to men as well as to women, to rulers as well as to individuals, to languages, to the inanimate, to anything. One common example of this is found in the mysticism of Juliana of Norwich, who in the fifteenth century portrayed Christ as mother. Furthermore, it must be recognized that motherhood is a relational identity; it only exists in relation to children. Particularly interesting is the relationship between mothers and daughters, because daughters are in many ways “pre-mothers.” It was the task of mothers to train daughters to become mothers, making the relationship between the two women very complex: a mother teaches a daughter to become another mother who will then teach her own daughters to become mothers. In some ways, the mother has a chance to recreate herself in her daughter. Given the centrality of motherhood to everyone in every way, medieval writers naturally expressed many opinions as to what made a good mother and the relationship between mother and child was frequently studied and examined. Because the function of motherhood was too important to be left to chance, advice was necessary to make sure that mothering was being done correctly. And that advice came from myriad sources, some explicit in their advice giving (such as sermons, instructional texts), others more subtle (poetic examples of “good” and “bad” mothers, for instance).

How the Good Wyf Taughte Hir Douȝtir is one of these advice texts, which purports to be an address from a mother to her daughter, although that is more likely a poetic conceit. It can also be read as an address, from an unknown (but probably clerical) author, to mothers about mothering. It is a text that has been frequently quoted by historians but rarely studied in detail. The poem reveals many details about motherhood in general in fifteenth-century England, as well as about specific relationship between mothers and daughters.² Although

¹ This statement by John Wycliffe, who was fairly pro-women for his time, was a sentiment oft repeated by others less favorable to women. Wycliffe, *Sermones*, ed. J. Loserth (London: Wyclif Society, 1888), p. 163.

² A brief note about dating: although the poem was apparently written in the fourteenth century, as evidenced by certain linguistic clues, it was copied several times in the fifteenth century, and is usually identified with that latter time period. Certainly it was popularized in the fifteenth century, from which several of the extant manuscripts and similar texts. Even in the Tudor period, it was viewed as a fifteenth-century text. See Frederick J. Furnivall, “Foreword,” *The Babees Book* (London: Early English Text Society, 1868), p. lxx.

it is an explicitly didactic poem, it can still be read as a descriptive text, whose evidence about theoretical mother-daughter relationship can be corroborated by comparison with admittedly anecdotal evidence of real mother-daughter relationships. Of the mother-child relationships, the one between mother and daughter especially requires further study; there is a kind of symbiotic relationship between the medieval mother and daughter, who is herself defined by her own potential motherhood as a mother-to-be. It is also important to note that this poem and its period are particularly significant ones for the development of the mother-daughter dynamic because it was a time of changing class definition, and in particular a time of new identities for women. These changes are reflected in the poem, along with the all too common tension between the generations, between teacher and pupil, and between woman and woman.

There are two possible ways of looking at this text and its origins. The first is to follow the reasoning of Felicity Riddy, who argued in an excellent 1996 *Speculum* article, that the text was written by a friar, as part of a series of instructional texts composed in the fourteenth century, many of which were etiquette guides or primers on manners.³ These texts were designed to teach the young how to be adults, to introduce civility and order into a post-plague world all too prone to disorder, random violence, and rapid changes in social/economic status.⁴ The number of extant manuscript copies, five from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, evidences their popularity. The poem was also printed in the sixteenth, in the great heyday of manners' texts.⁵ If Riddy is correct, then the text was really written not for daughters but for mothers; it was intended to train mothers on how to be mothers, and is therefore a prescriptive text.

For Riddy the poem also had a broader intent; to train women (mothers, daughters, and all women in between) on how to be women. The poem certainly sets out to define the standards of female behavior. The friar-author is trying to establish standards of female behavior

³ Felicity Riddy, "Mother Knows Best: Reading Society Change in a Courtesy Text," *Speculum*, January 1996 (vol. 71, no. 1), p. 70. Riddy notes that the earliest copy of the poem is found in a friar's notebook along with texts in Norman French and Latin with prayers, devotional texts, and other instructional texts.

⁴ Norbert Elias, *History of Manners*, Volume I of the *Civilizing Process* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 62.

⁵ Boyd Berry, "The First English Pediatricians and Tudor Attitudes Toward Childhood," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, October–December, 1974 (vol. 35), pp. 561 and 564; see also Michael Curtin, "A Question of Manners: Status and Gender in Etiquette and Courtesy," *Journal of Modern History*, September, 1985 (vol. 57, n. 3).

in both the mother and the daughters, but is expecting the mothers to learn the lesson directly from him / his text and to then in turn train the daughters to be “good wijfs.” From the very first line, the poem creates a definition of “good” female behavior and identity. In the fifteenth century the term “good wijf” could be applied to any virtuous woman; it clearly reveals the association of a woman’s virtue and her identity, as well as the linkage of those two, with her marital status. The only good woman was a good wife; even nuns were the “brides of Christ” and incorporated a spiritual marital identity.

Although there is no doubt that the poem was intended to be prescriptive and instructional, there is a second way of viewing the text. A good mother, according to the standards delineated by the poem, would have to internalize the instructions of the poem, “a ful good womman to be.”⁶ She would then have to instruct her daughter in this code of behavior, by instruction, certainly, but more importantly by example. Because the rules were internalized and transmitted as much by comportment as by recitation, the second way of looking at the text is therefore descriptive, at least in part. There is a cycle here: the friar uses the poem to tell women how to act and how to teach their daughters behavioral standards. Because of the popularity of the poem and of other guides that present similar standards, the instructions become internalized values. The poem therefore also reveals how women acted after the values have been inculcated.⁷ The text is in fact simultaneously prescriptive and descriptive; not that its original audience would have been aware of this, nor needed to be.

Is there any possibility that the author was a real woman, perhaps even a real mother? Possible but unlikely. Given the rarity of women’s texts, and the inclusion of the earliest manuscript edition in the friar’s handbook (although it could have as its origin a folk poem adapted by the friar), it is unlikely that the poem as a text came from the hand of a woman. Although it must be noted that medieval women wrote similar texts: Dhouda wrote a letter of instruction to her son in the ninth century, and Christine de Pisan offered “how to be a woman” guidebooks in the fifteenth century. Yet such texts were

⁶ *How the Good Wijf Taughte Hir Doughtir*, Lambeth MS 853, c. 1430. Printed in Furnivall, *The Babees Book*; ln. 3. Hereafter referred to as *Good Wijf*.

⁷ Curtin, p. 397, notes that “courtesy writers wrote as reformers of the aristocracy as much as they did as its propagandists.”

unusual. However, it is irrelevant whether the author is a friar or some anonymous woman; the interests were one and the same for either, such as control of the young and the shaping of the society's values as whole.⁸ The friar may be expressing himself on one of two levels; as a representative of the Church as social authority, or as a "mothering" figure himself who's job is, like lay women, to guide and mold the young. The other possible origin is that the poem merely reflects the actions and ideas of real mothers. Either way, because these ideas became so ingrained as standards of behavior, the poem essentially reflects the kind of advice a real mother would and did give her daughter, and can be discussed as such.

Historians have previously dismissed *How the Good Wijf Taugte Hir Dougtir* and similar texts as simple etiquette guides, concerned exclusively with manners.⁹ However, the poem also imparts values to its original audience, and which are in turn revealed to the modern reader. Does the poem even address values, or just manners and behavior? Most certainly the former. The poem is more than just an etiquette book, which is defined as concentrating "on precise descriptions of the exact rules of interpersonal behavior with a relative disregard for moral thought."¹⁰ The poem is concerned with behavior, certainly; but it is also very much interested with morality, with the values behind actions. As noted above, the opening line states that an ideal woman is supposed to be "good," a "wijf" (as the fullest realization of her womanhood), and a mother, who teaches her "doug-tir" to also be a good wife and mother. These were naturally the idealized roles of women in the late Middle Ages, and have been more than amply studied in recent years.¹¹ But these were more than ideals; this was the

⁸ Riddy, p. 66, argues that it is inarguable that the author was a friar or some other figure of similar authority because the text is "ideological" in intent.

⁹ Elias, p. 60 does not address *How the Good Wijf Taugte Hir Dougtir* directly but does classify similar texts as mere courtesy books; see also Diane Bornstein, *Mirrors of Courtesy* (Hamden: Archon Books, p. 1975), pp. 76–77.

¹⁰ Curtin, p. 409.

¹¹ See for instance: Judith Bennett, *Women in the medieval English Countryside: Gender and Household in Brigstock Before the Plague* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), hereafter referred to as Bennett; Barbara Hanawalt, 'Of Good and Ill Repute: Gender and Social Control in medieval England' (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Hanawalt, *The Ties that Bind: Peasant Families in medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Helen Jewell, *Women in medieval England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Henrietta Leyser, *medieval Women: A Social History of Women in England 450–1500* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Angela Lucas, *Women in the Middle Ages: Religion, Marriage, and Letters* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983);

reality. Women were wives, mothers, daughters, teachers, and morally aware in all those fields; they were supposed to be "good."

What value for society as a whole in women's values? Admittedly, women's lives were proscribed by their homes, especially after marriage. Physically limited to the home, women took it over, made it a sphere in which they could wield tremendous amounts of power. The world of women, the world of the home, should not necessarily be viewed as limiting the influence of women. They dominated the home in the same way that they were excluded from the male-dominated world outside of the home. Many historians have recently studied how women shaped their lives around the home, and at how much influence in society in general that they developed from this. Because, initially at least, everyone (men as well as women) was part of a home, women had tremendous influence upon society as a whole in the fifteenth century.

For instance, women developed a domestic spirituality in which they came to associate what they did in the home with spiritual work, as well as exercising their need to be spiritually active within the home, as they could not be active in the church with its male-only clergy and hierarchy.¹² In the home women could pray at will, teach their households their own particular religious beliefs, whether orthodox or heretic, express their need for spiritual independence, etc.¹³ Women dominated the home in secular ways as well, particularly in the education of the young. In every way except perhaps economic, women were the true heads of the household.¹⁴ All of this domestic power

Shulamith Shahar, *The Fourth Estate: A History of Women in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1983). These represent just a few of the recent numerous works on women in the Middle Ages.

¹² Diana Webb, "Woman and Home: The Domestic Setting of Late medieval Spirituality," *Women in the Church*, ed. W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (London: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 159. See also Kate Mertes, *The English Noble Household, 1250-1600: Good Governance and Polite Rule* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

¹³ A clear example of this can be found in the activities of Lollard women in the homes, reading to their servants bits of the Wycliffite vernacular bible, an act of rebellion but also of pure spiritual empowerment.

¹⁴ Lucas, p. 133, refers to women as the managers of households. Women were in fact tremendously important to the household economically. The *Good Wyf* poem acknowledges the economic function of women in the household economy, offering advice on what not to do as one "to þe market þi borel for to selle," ln. 69. For other discussions of the economic role of medieval women, see also Bennett's discussion of the "conjugal economy," pp. 115-129; Hanawalt, "Household Economy," in *The Ties that Bound*, pp. 105-168; Shahar, pp. 150ff.; and Leyser, "Women at Work,"

is amply illustrated in the poem of the *Good Wijf*, which concerns itself primarily with domestic values. There are a few references in the poem to a wife submitting to her husband, yet the poem seems more concerned with the power of women over the household. There are, however, a few notable references to life outside the home and which even more fully illustrate the range of women: in church, in the streets, and in the market place.

Furthermore, the poem represents the kind of education women had available to them.¹⁵ Women were educated at home, except for a few who attended convent schools. "Home" here includes the immediate family residence, relatives, neighbors, as well as the houses in which girls often went to as servants.¹⁶ The role of the mother was doubly important in the raising of daughters. Mothers taught their daughters how to be women, but they also taught their daughters to be adults, to function in life. A son might learn these life skills outside the home, where he would also be exposed to the influence of more people than the limited world opened to daughters, surrounded primarily by their mothers and other women. This role of mother as educator may account for the rather berating tone of the poem, which from the very beginning warns that "the good wijf taugte hir doughtir / Ful manye a tyme & ofte."¹⁷ Surely the daughters of the fifteenth century became as tired as any daughters of any age of hearing repeatedly, "manye a tyme & ofte" what they should and should not do. They were hearing these lessons in church, from their mothers, from their poetry, everywhere.

The poem could also be addressing a more problematic woman-woman relationship than the mother-daughter relationship, one that was in the process of being redefined in the fifteenth century by changes in class identities and which needed some expression of standards, a handbook such as this poem. Riddy points out that the

pp. 142–167. Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World 1300–1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) looks at women's work (including that of married women) in one particular field, alebrewing.

¹⁵ Elias, p. 60ff., outline some of the basics of children's domestic education; see also Sharon Michalove, "Equal in Opportunity? The Education of Aristocratic Women 1450–1540," *Women's Education in Early Modern Europe A History, 1500–1800*, ed. Barbara J. Whitehead (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), pp. 48 and 53.

¹⁶ Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldrick (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), p. 370.

¹⁷ *Good Wijf*, lns. 1–2.

poem might not be aimed just at shaping literal mother and daughter relationships, but might also include housewife and female servant.¹⁸ Because increasing numbers of young girls left their homes and went into service in the urban communities of the fifteenth century, it was important for society as a whole that these employers be as much surrogate mothers as they were bosses.¹⁹ Riddy notes that the female servants who are being employed in such households and who are being molded by the mother-cum-authority figure are of a lower class than the household in which they are employed.²⁰ They aspire to that higher social status, and are thus more open to influence from it.

As well as a window into class divisions and fears, the poem could also be a way of bridging classes, drawing one up to the standards of the higher. As a new urban, bourgeois class emerges in the late middle ages (particularly notable in the fifteenth century), there was naturally a growing tension between them (the bourgeois) and the lower class of urban working poor (many of whom came from the older rural peasant class but which had to forge a new identity). The bourgeois had originated from this lower class and fear resulted on both sides. The bourgeois looked upon the lower classes with some disdain and with caution; having so recently been that class, they saw the lower classes as a constant reminder of what they had been and they lived with the perpetual anxiety of falling back down.²¹ The *Good Wif* warns her daughter to avoid lewd behavior not just because it could be viewed as lewd or sinful, but also because it might be viewed as coarse, a failure of one's class: "Ne wende þou not þe market þi borel [cloth] for to selle / And þanne to þe tauerne þi worschip to felle."²² The younger woman (daughter, servant?) is also urged to avoid the common amusements: "Go not to þe wrastelinge, no to schotyng at cok / As it were a strumpet or a giggelot [loose woman]."²³

Etiquette guides, such as *How the Good Wif Taughte Hir Doughtir*, were identity for this new class, to distinguish themselves from other classes

¹⁸ Riddy, p. 83.

¹⁹ Riddy, p. 71; Hanawalt, *The Ties that Bound*, pp. 166–167, addresses the role of servants in the medieval peasant family.

²⁰ Riddy, p. 72.

²¹ Elias, *Power and Civility*, Volume II of the *Civilizing Process* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1939, 1982), pp. 330–31.

²² *Good Wif*, lns. 69–70.

²³ *Good Wif*, lns. 81–82.

and as a way for members of the bourgeois to recognize each other. Texts such as the *Good Wyf* poem also helped to enforce standards of behavior on other classes, such as the lower classes at this point in history, in a few centuries bourgeois values will become the norm for all classes.²⁴ Simultaneously, the lower class felt confused by being dominated by a class so close to itself and yet so self-consciously different. The lower classes were being shaped into something resembling the bourgeoisie, transforming them so that they no longer resembled or represented what the middling classes feared becoming again.

The world of the *Good Wyf* is very much an urban one, and represents in particular the interests of the middling classes, a precursor of the bourgeoisie of later centuries.²⁵ Many of the dictates are aimed at women of the town and city, although the poem also presents more general values, which are applicable to a broad spectrum of women of all social classes. For instance, it naturally emphasizes prayer; the mother prays for “the blessynge of god” upon her daughter, and that she (the daughter, that is) “haue grace to wend þe way ful riȝt.”²⁶ The exhortations to pray may be more evidence that the original author was a cleric, although it may also simply be pro forma for the time period. Even if a friar did write the original poem, it is unlikely that the ideas expressed was his invention alone; they resemble many other general instructions to the young and often read as though they had their origins in folk (i.e. common sense) wisdom. The Virgin Mary, the “modir brigȝt,”²⁷ is also mentioned frequently, probably as a symbol of the perfect mother as well as the patron saint of mothers specifically. However, even those values that were applicable to women of any milieu seem to have special meaning for these urban women.

For instance, the poem is very vehement in insistence upon the importance of reputation. There are numerous and constant references to shame and scandal (which are to be avoided), as well as

²⁴ Riddy, p. 76.

²⁵ Riddy, p. 76, discusses how the poem creates a uniquely bourgeois framework of gender. It is an interesting point but may be reading more “class” back into the poem. See also Edith Rickert, “Introduction” to *The Babees Book: medieval Manners for the Young: Done into English from Dr. Furnivall’s Texts* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1966), p. xxix.

²⁶ *Good Wyf*, lns. 216 and 218.

²⁷ *Good Wyf*, ln. 216.

reminders that public appearance (both in terms of physical aspect but more importantly in terms of behavior) are constantly being judged by others. The *Good Wyf* does it herself, when she warns the daughter to beware “ony man speke to þee”²⁸ for “For alle men ben not trewe”²⁹ no matter what he says. She also warns the daughter to beware how she treats her servants; treat them well and “þan schal þei seie weel of þee, boþe þe yonge and oolde / þi good name is to þi freendis.”³⁰ This repeats what the Paris Ménagier told his wife in a late fourteenth century letter of advice; treat your servants well so that they will speak well of you.

In fact, reputation with one’s servants is paramount in the *Good Wyf*’s mind. The only repercussion of how a housewife treats her servants that the poem is concerned with is how the servant discusses the employer’s behavior. The *Good Wyf* does not acknowledge another possible benefit from treating servants well, that they might work harder. She has very little advice on how the housewife can affect the labor output of her servants. She does note that a good house manager will hurry servants along when there is much work to be done: “And if þi nede be greet & þi tyme streite, / þan go þi silf þerto & worche an houswijfes brayde” for if she stands over them they will work faster.³¹ Expediency and efficiency are certainly important. But the only method the *Good Wyf* specifically recommends to improve the work output of servants is to lean upon them, to rebuke or dismiss the servant who does not do his or her job. If the poem is also addressing women as house managers, in the training of female servants, then this would serve as direct instruction of that housewife; any female servant who became familiar with the poem would also have a direct warning of what happens to lazy servants.

Passages such as these, which focus on the relationship between housewife and servants, emphasize the class distinctions of the poem, as does the fact that so much of the poem is taken up with issues of servants, business, and interestingly, one’s reputation amongst one’s neighbors. Three times in the poem the *Good Wyf* addresses the relationship between neighbors, which establish that the poem is created from and for an urban culture, in which neighbors live close

²⁸ *Good Wyf*, ln. 89.

²⁹ *Good Wyf*, ln. 92.

³⁰ *Good Wyf*, lns. 142–43.

³¹ *Good Wyf*, lns. 116–17.

to one another and are highly aware of one another's behavior. First, the *Good Wyf* cautions her daughter to avoid gossip about her richer neighbors, although it is important to note that the *Good Wyf* knows that everyone gossips and is gossiped about: "And if þi neighboris wijf haþ on rich a-tire, / þerfore mocke þou ne scorne, brenne not as fier."³² What she is really cautioning her daughter against is covetousness: "þanke god of heuen for þat he hath þe geuene / And so þou schalt, my doughtir, a good lijf lyuande."³³ Everyone gossips; its the intent of the act that the *Good Wyf* is concerned about. Second, the *Good Wyf* reminds the daughter that "Whanne þou art a wijf, a neigbore for to be" and to love well her neighbors.³⁴ It is as though the two identities are inextricably linked in the mind of the poem's author: wife and neighbor. This is a wholly urban landscape. Finally, the *Good Wyf* turns it around: if her daughter becomes a rich wife she is warned to not be "to hard / But weelcome faire þi neiboris þat comen to þee warde."³⁵

But most importantly is how the daughter comports herself, lest anyone either misjudge her, or, worse, judge her correctly for a woman of loose morals. The poem actually addresses both issues distinctly; the importance of appearing morally upright and the importance of being morally upright. In terms of appearing virtuous, the *Good Wyf* counsels her daughter that "whanne þou sittist in þe chirche, þi beedis þou schalt bidde / Make þou no iangelyuge To freende nor to sibbe."³⁶ Especially in church, when all those gossiping eyes are upon her, it is important to appear good, to "be of fair beerynge & of good tunge."³⁷ As to the importance of truly being good, the *Good Wyf* warns her daughter, in several places and in several ways, to "Kepe þee from synne, fro vilonye, & fro blame."³⁸

Nor is the *Good Wyf* alone in this advice. In the late fourteenth century, a Paris husband wrote an instructional guide to his young wife. The vast age difference between the *Ménagier* and his wife (he was middle-aged, she was fifteen upon their marriage, and he makes it clear that he expects her to outlive him) makes their relationship

³² *Good Wyf*, lns. 146–47.

³³ *Good Wyf*, lns. 148–49.

³⁴ *Good Wyf*, ln. 160.

³⁵ *Good Wyf*, lns. 167–68.

³⁶ *Good Wyf*, lns. 25–26.

³⁷ *Good Wyf*, ln. 28.

³⁸ *Good Wyf*, ln. 48.

essentially one of parent to child, and is comparable to the *Good Wijf* poem. He too expresses a hope that his wife be concerned first and foremost with her public reputation: "For the more you know the greater your honor and the greater the praise belonging to your parents and to me and to others around you."³⁹

Certainly the poem *How the Good Wijf Taughte Hir Dougtir* confirms the lack of privacy in the Middle Ages. There is more than just a lack of privacy in the physical spaces in which medieval people lived their lives; there is also a lack of privacy of thought and experience. Judith Bennett has argued that married women may have had less of a public life than single women, in that single women had more public opportunities, such as the chance to leave home and work elsewhere.⁴⁰ But this does not mean that wives had true privacy in a modern sense. Far from it. The poem points out the very public nature of everyone's lives, by its insistence upon the importance of reputation and maintaining a certain public image. Even one's reputation with one's servants was important; before her servants women had a public image even within the home.

Servants in a medieval household could become very much a part of the family (hence the position of the *Good Wijf* as a teacher of her servants as though they were her pseudo-children). Yet the relationship between the women as housewives and their servants was not always an easy one. The *Ménagier of Paris* warns his wife that she must be careful to treat her servants with respect and generosity but to also watch them carefully, for they "have no shame and spread abroad evil report concerning you, which is worst of all."⁴¹ The worst thing that can happen to the *Good Wijf*, or to her daughter, or to any woman of medieval Europe, was loss of reputation. Note that the reputation which the servants have is as important, because it reflects back upon the woman who employs them, teaches them, and is responsible for them socially and spiritually, as well as economically. She must be concerned with their reputation as well as her own, just as all mothers are warned to be interested in the reputations of their daughters.⁴²

³⁹ *Ménagier of Paris*, "Manual for his Wife," trans. by Eileen Power and published in *Women's Lives in medieval Europe*, ed. Emilie Amt (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 318.

⁴⁰ Bennett, p. 7.

⁴¹ *Ménagier of Paris*, p. 324; see also Hanawalt, *The Ties that Bound*, pp. 166–167.

⁴² *Ménagier of Paris*, pp. 324–25.

It is interesting that the *Good Wyf* poem does not suggest that the daughter act in so circumspect a manner that she is not talked about (which would, say, be the nineteenth-century response, when women were told that any kind of public attention—good or bad—was to be avoided).⁴³ Instead, the public nature of fifteenth-century society is confirmed and reinforced. The daughter is encouraged to develop a reputation, as long as it was a good one. The mother says that if the daughter is a good manager of her servants, “aftir þi good seruise / þi name schal arise.”⁴⁴ Public discussion of people was in fact a necessary part of the system of civic order, of social control; people monitored one another to maintain peace and social stability.⁴⁵ Gossip about one’s neighbors was expected; even as the church warned against the evils of gossip, it used gossip to identify heretics and transgressors.⁴⁶ It seemed to be a particular feature of civic landscape.

The poem shows women creating their own roles (as wives and mothers), preparing their daughters to fulfill these roles, and preparing their female servants as well (who, according to the standards of the day, would also aspire to be wives and mothers). Historians must therefore reconsider the function of women in society; more than just housewives, they were powerful shapers of future society in the broader scope of their power. Riddy points out that girls may have represented a larger portion of migratory labor than boys did; the role of women as nurturers/educators of these girls in homes makes this role of women doubly important.⁴⁷

⁴³ This degree of public self-effacement by women can perhaps be best expressed by a common saying from the American South that a good woman’s name only appeared in the newspapers three times in her life: when she was born, when she married, and when she died.

⁴⁴ *Good Wyf*, lns. 122–23.

⁴⁵ Laura K. Deal, “Widows and Reputation in the Diocese of Chester, England, 1560–1650,” *Journal of Family History* October 1998 (vol. 23, n. 4) discusses how gossip, the use of words, was uniquely a woman’s weapon.

⁴⁶ See for instance the testimony of Margery Baxter’s neighbors about her Lollard activity in Norwich, 1428, in Norman Tanner, ed. *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428–1429* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), pp. 41–51. Several fourteenth and fifteenth-century writers created stories in which women expressed unease with someone who was too close-mouthed, that did not willingly share information about neighbors, family, etc. It was a way for the society to police itself; see for instance La Tour-Landry, “The Book of the Knight of the La Tour-Landry,” quoted in *Chaucer’s World*, compiled by Edith Rickert and ed. by Clair C. Olson and Martin M. Crow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), p. 50.

⁴⁷ Riddy, pp. 71 and 83.

The poem also requires a re-evaluation of how women educated their daughters. Because women were excluded from formal schooling, the exclusive provenance of men, women were reliant entirely upon other women for their education, unless their fathers' were unusually interested in educating the daughters at home (and this did occur, such as with Thomas More in the sixteenth century). It is true that the purpose of education for most women was to prepare them to fulfill their idealized function of motherhood, but even if women were primarily teaching other women how to be mothers, this in no way limits the importance of women as teachers. Given the centrality of that role, this in fact makes women tremendously important to society as a whole in their role as educators.⁴⁸ Women are in fact powerful educators in the fifteenth century; they raised daughters until they went off and became good wives themselves, they raised servants (often other women's daughters), but also helped to educate and raise sons, at least when they were still young children. Far too often the way in which women educated has been misunderstood, overlooked, or dismissed.⁴⁹ A woman teaching her daughter to spin and sharing with her stories which are meant to inculcate in the girl mores, values, and behavioral habits is still far too often dismissed as merely sharing domestic skills while gossiping.⁵⁰ The *Good Wif* takes her job very seriously; near the end of the poem, she reflects that "Betere were a child vnborne / þan vntaught a wijs lore" such as she has been presenting.⁵¹

Briefly setting aside the relationship between women as house managers and other women as servants, what was the relationship between mother and child, specifically daughter, according to the poem? It is of course necessary to address the standard theories about medieval parenting. Philippe Ariès, in his groundbreaking but dated study of the history of the *Centuries of Childhood*, argued that medieval people had no real concept of childhood as a discernible, separate sphere of life. Ariès asserted that "there was no place for childhood in the

⁴⁸ Thurer, p. 134.

⁴⁹ Even historians who are trying to reconsider the role and function of women in the medieval world still tend to downplay the importance of women's roles as educators. See for instance Webb, p. 161: "Women might teach only children and other women." This downplays the importance of having influence over the next generation. A more favorable view can be found in Michalove's discussion of Mary Lisle, p. 63.

⁵⁰ Hanawalt, '*Of Good and Ill Repute*', p. 95.

⁵¹ *Good Wif*, lns. 206–207.

medieval world.”⁵² Focusing on images of children in art, Ariès points out that until the fourteenth century in Italy, and later in northern Europe (following the progress of the Renaissance), children were depicted as miniature adults and that this was not by accident; it was part of a lack of recognition of childhood as such. Ariès is quick to point out that although the Middle Ages did not recognize childhood as an idea, medieval society was not lacking in concern or care for their young, although he does sometimes refer to the medieval people as “indifferent” to the emotional needs of children.⁵³ Before the fourteen century, according to Ariès, children were either little adults (with no demarcation other than size and learning) or in the earlier stage of infant, when they were simply non-persons.⁵⁴

Since the publication of Ariès’ theories, many historians have questioned (and refuted) them, and argued that medieval parents cared for and even loved their children, although it is still not clear that they recognized childhood as a separate stage of life.⁵⁵ For Ariès the shift in attitude toward childhood begins in the fourteenth century, which would place the *Good Wif* poem right at that liminal moment of societal understanding. What does it reveal about ideas of childhood? There is within the poem a feeling of nervousness about the young as a group. Either the anonymous friar-author, or the mother-persona he has created, was aware that the young were different from adults. The very existence of etiquette texts, books of manners, and instructional poems like the *Good Wif*, reveals that medieval people recognized children as something different from adults.⁵⁶ They are to be formed, educated, etc. They are adults in the making. This is not to say, however, that the Middle Ages had the same view of childhood as does modern society; but medieval writers did acknowledge its existence as a separate stage of life.⁵⁷

⁵² Ariès, p. 33.

⁵³ Ariès, pp. 128 and 131.

⁵⁴ Ariès, p. 129. Ariès cites an Italian view of medieval English parenting as “the want of affection” and seems to agree with it as being common throughout the medieval west; p. 365.

⁵⁵ See for instance Hanawalt, *The Ties That Bound* and ‘Of Good and Ill Repute;’ others accept continue to accept Ariès. Shari L. Thurer, *The Myths of Motherhood: How Culture Reinvents the Good Mother* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994), p. 85.

⁵⁶ Curtin, p. 418.

⁵⁷ Rickert, p. xxii, makes an interesting suggestion. She agrees (or rather precedes) Ariès’s claim that medieval parents had little love for their children, witnessed by

To return to the issue of affection raised by Ariès, did medieval mothers care emotionally for their children, particularly their daughters? Can the concern that the *Good Wif* shows for her daughter's education (in how to run a household, how to live her life), reputation, future, etc. be interpreted as an expression of love, of true personal affection? She (or even the friar; it is possible for him to have affection for the youth he is trying to guide) seems very concerned that the daughter "a good lijf lyuande."⁵⁸ And if the poem is also addressing the relationship between housewives and servants, should one even ask about the possibility of affection?

Perhaps, but there seems to have been a great deal of ambiguity in the relationship between parent and child, particularly between mother and daughter.⁵⁹ There was care and fondness but also a strong sense that children were independent, including emotionally, of the parent. Children were supposed to go off and create families of their own; they were not an extension of the parents but a separate creation on their own. A mother could in fact lose her children twice, if she was of the upper class; prior to the child leaving home for marriage, children of the nobility (both male and female) were frequently sent off to be educated in the homes of other nobles. This would diminish the power of noble mothers over their own children but increasing their power over other mothers' children.⁶⁰ Similarly, lower class urban daughters might leave home before marriage in order to work in another woman's home.

Lower class women, especially peasant girls, were also encouraged to leave home before marriage, to seek employment elsewhere (encouraged externally by financial pressure and internally by seizing their best opportunity to seek opportunities before settling down for married life of their own).⁶¹ The commonness of separation, particularly amongst the urban and upper classes (less common for the peasant families, except when children left home after marriage) did not make the parting easy or painless, just common. Yet there was always a

their willingness to turn their children over to other people to raise, but suggests that because of the many manners and courtesy texts (such as the *Good Wif* poem) these children were compensated with "discipline, education, social opportunity, and the opening up of careers" in the households into which they were fostered or in which they served.

⁵⁸ *Good Wif*, ln. 149.

⁵⁹ Shahar, p. 143.

⁶⁰ Ariès, p. 365.

⁶¹ Bennett, pp. 66 and 178.

sense that children and parents belonged equally to one community and were of concern to one another. Children, especially daughters, always left the home at some point. Either they died, or they married and created households of their own, or they joined some other house, such as a monastic community. The *Good Wyf* warns her own daughter to not become too attached to any daughters she might have:

And loke to þi dougten þat noon of hem be lorn:
 Fro þat ilk tyme þat þei be of þee born,
 Bisie þee, & gadere faste towards her mariage,
 And geue hem to spowsynge as soone as þei ben ablee.
 Maydens ben fair & amyable,
 But of her loue ful vnstable,
 Mi leue child.⁶²

Certainly this might be interpreted as a glimpse into the latent (or perhaps not so latent) misogyny of the anonymous friar-author; women are frequently portrayed in sermons and church manuals as fickle, “ful vnstable.” But it also shows a true understanding that daughters always leave, underscored as every stanza of the poem is by the ending line of “mi leue child” which emphasizes the intimacy of this mother-daughter relationship. It’s the destiny that society has designed for them. Even if the daughter does not leave home it is no guarantee that she will have a good relationship with her mother; the frustration of the unfilled daughter could lead to tension between mother and daughter. In 1469 Margaret Paston wrote to her son John Paston II, that he needed to find a foster home for his as yet unmarried sister “for we be eythere of vs wery of othere.”⁶³

This separation was particularly noticeable in the relationship between mothers and daughters; sons were more likely to bring their new, own family into their parents’ household, whereas daughters left to marry into some other’s son’s household. Perhaps this is why the behavior of daughters was so important: it was something that a stranger family would see and use to judge the mother who had raised that daughter.⁶⁴ It harkens back to the concern for reputation,

⁶² *Good Wyf*, lns. 195–201.

⁶³ Margaret Paston to her son, John Paston II, *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Norman Davis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), vol. I, n. 201, p. 339.

⁶⁴ Bennett, p. 178 notes that daughters were encouraged to seek financial independence to prepare for the final separation of marrying and forming a household of their own.

for avoiding what the *Good Wyf* calls “foule fame”⁶⁵ or an “evil name.”⁶⁶ Oddly enough, daughters-in-law can represent the exact opposite: the daughter that comes into a mother’s home and stays. Daughters-in-law do not present that fear of expected separation that exists between mothers and daughters or between mothers and servants-as-surrogate-daughters (because the servant will also leave to establish her own house one day).

There is interesting example of mother-daughter-in-law relationship from the fifteenth century to consider; that of Margery Kempe. Although Margery and her widowed daughter-in-law lived together a year and a half, their relationship was not apparently as close as it could be; given Margery’s tendency towards dramatic scenes and claims of saintliness, it is easy to see how her daughter-in-law might be uncomfortable with her. At one point the memoir notes that after accompanying her daughter-in-law to her home in Germany,

the said Creature [Margery] remained in Danzig in Germany for about five or six weeks, and was warmly welcomed by many people . . . There was no one so much against her as was her daughter-in-law, who was most obliged and beholden to have comforted her, if she had been kind.⁶⁷

It might be tempting to conclude that Margery and her unnamed German daughter-in-law do not represent the most affectionate of mother-daughter-in-law relationships. Yet consider that in a detailed memoir, Margery only mentions one of her fourteen children (and without giving his name) and his wife; never does she mention her own daughters (assuming at least one of the fourteen were girls, a natural assumption). What was it about this son and his wife that warranted mention? Is it because the son had a problem with lechery, which allowed his mother to preach yet again about sin and penance?⁶⁸ Is it because she and the daughter-in-law had similar habits, a taste for travel? Although it must be noted that the younger woman tires of it long before Margery, the two women do spend almost two years together. Unlike her mother-in-law (who travels for years without any apparent homesickness), the German woman

⁶⁵ *Good Wyf*, ln. 65.

⁶⁶ *Good Wyf*, ln. 64.

⁶⁷ *Book of Margery Kempe*, trans. by B. A. Windeatt (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), p. 275.

⁶⁸ *Kempe*, p. 268.

expresses longing to see her child, who has been left behind and eventually returns to her own German family.

There is another tension that can exist between mothers and daughters, and which is subtly revealed in the poem of the *Good Wif*. Not all women are natural mothers, although of course in the fifteenth century this was probably an inconceivable idea, as the identification of women with motherhood was so marked. Many women feel anxiety about motherhood in general and about raising daughters in particular. Or perhaps there are particular anxieties about raising daughters, just as there are particular, but different, anxieties about raising sons. Fears about motherhood may stem from fears of childbirth, understandable given the pain it entails as well as the very real threat of mortality, especially in the fifteenth century; or they may stem from fears about the responsibility of raising children.⁶⁹ The *Good Wif* expresses this fear at the end of the poem, when she states that she “now haue y þee taugt, dougtir, As my modir dide me.”⁷⁰ She has done the best she could, given the limits of her own education, but worries that it will not be enough to raise a good child, a good woman.

There may also be general anxiety about children/childbirth as representative of one's sexuality, which was viewed with ambiguity itself, given the church's tendency to be anti-sex. Faced with constant strictures to avoid sex yet at the same time repeatedly being told that one's identity as a woman was best fulfilled by motherhood, for which sex is obviously necessary (except for the perfect mother, the Virgin Mother of Christ), is it any wonder that women were ambivalent about sex and all that it entailed, such as childbirth and the raising of children? In *Holy Maidenhood*, a treatise exhorting virginity written in the thirteenth century, childbirth is described as “that cruel distressing anguish, that fierce and stabbing pain, that incessant misery, that torment upon torment, that wailing outcry” and as a source of shame.⁷¹ Much better to choose virginity. Raising a daughter could evoke these fears twice over; once for the mother about giving birth,

⁶⁹ See for instance the classic Ariès argument that high infant mortality rates prevented medieval parents from being emotionally invested in their children.

⁷⁰ *Good Wif*, ln. 202.

⁷¹ *Holy Maidenhood*, from B. Millet and J. Wogan-Browne, ed. and trans., *Medieval English Prose for Women: Selections from the Katherine Group and Ancrène Wisse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1990), p. 32.

and by extension, fears for the daughter who will herself endure childbirth someday. It is conceivable that mothers feel apprehension about raising daughters to suffer.

Returning again to Margery Kempe, one can see a classic example of ambivalence about motherhood. Faced with the imminent birth of her first child, "she was troubled with severe attacks of sickness" until birth, which may be interpreted to mean emotional as well as physical sickness.⁷² After giving birth, she "despaired of her life, believing she might not live."⁷³ This began Margery's long downward spiral into madness, extremes of behavior that are the source of so much debate amongst historians. Notice that much of Margery's nervousness and the expressions of it in extravagant gestures are sexual in nature.

There are of course as many reasons why mothers and daughters may not get along as there have been mothers and daughters. Perhaps the most infamous of disastrous mother-daughter relationships of the fifteenth century, and perhaps of the entire Middle Ages, were the two Paston cases. In c. 1449 Agnes Paston began a long fight with her daughter Elizabeth over the latter's refusal to marry the man her mother had chosen for her. In 1469 Agnes's granddaughter Margery (by her eldest son, John Paston I and his wife Margaret) delivered another daughter crises to the Paston family when she secretly married the family bailiff. Agnes is convinced that she has found the best possible mate for her daughter, a classic case of mother-knows-best, but also just a typical gentry arranged marriage. She wrote to her son John Paston I that her

cosyn Clere thynkyth þat it were a foly to forsake hym lesse þan ge knew of on owdyre as good ore bettere, and I haue assayde gowre sustere and I fonde here neuer so wyly to noon as sche is to hym, gyf it be so þat his londe stande cleere.⁷⁴

The Pastons, as with many families of their social aspirations, were anxious that each eligible child secures as advantageous a marriage as possible. The potential groom selected for Elizabeth was Stephen Scrope, step-son to Sir John Fastolf, but who was also thirty years older than she and disfigured by smallpox.⁷⁵ For reasons that are

⁷² *Kempe*, p. 41.

⁷³ *Kempe*, p. 41.

⁷⁴ Agnes Paston to John Paston I, vol. I, n. 18, p. 30.

⁷⁵ Frances and Joseph Gies, *Marriage and Family in the Middle Ages* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), p. 264.

fairly obvious, Elizabeth rejects what would have been a socially advantageous marriage offer. Agnes responds by keeping Elizabeth a virtual prisoner, as reported by cousin Elizabeth Clere:

sche may not speke wyth no man ho so euer come, ne not may se
ne speke wyth my man ne wyth seruauntes of hir moderys but þat
sche bereth hir on hand oþerwise pan she meynth. And sche hath son
Esterne [Easter] þe most part be betyn onys in þe weke or twyes and
som tyme twyes on o day and hir hed broken in or thre places.⁷⁶

Such beating of children was of course common in the period. There are many records of accidentally dying by being beaten too hard by their parents.⁷⁷ The *Good Wyf* herself recommends to her daughter that

if þi children been rebel, & wole not hem lowe,
If ony of hem mys dooþ, nouþer banne hem ne blowe,
But take a smert rodde, & bete hem on a row
Til þei crei mercy, & be of her gilt aknowe.⁷⁸

Elizabeth's mother's response is a classic example of either parental indifference (if one follows the theories of Ariès), or of tough love, of a mother who is determined to do what she feels is best for her daughter. In spite of the age difference and the apparent infirmity of Scrope, it would have been a impressive marital alliance for the Paston family. Even a cousin of Elizabeth's warns the family to reject Scrope only if they are absolutely sure that a better prospect can be found. Agnes's response seems harsh to modern sensibilities, but not extreme given the value system of the gentry of the time period. After the beatings, Elizabeth did agree to the marriage but Fastolf had changed his mind. Elizabeth later married, twice (Robert Poynings and Sir George Browne).

Elizabeth's niece Margery creates a marriage crises as well when she announces in 1469 that she has secretly exchanged vows with Richard Calle, Paston family bailiff. The process of marriage was still in the fifteenth century an uncertain one; Margery and Richard are both examined by the bishop of Norwich to determine if the exchange of vows was a valid marriage or not; the bishop determines that it is. Margaret decides to sever relations with her daughter: "I schargyd my seruantys þat sche xuld not be reseuyed in myn

⁷⁶ Elizabeth Clere to John Paston I, vol. II, n. 446, p. 32.

⁷⁷ Hanawalt, *Ties that Bound*, p. 183, recounts several cases in which corporal punishment of children by their parents became fatal punishment.

⁷⁸ *Good Wyf*, lns. 188–191.

hows" and that she expects her daughter to someday "xal ful sore repent here leudnes here-aftyre and I pray God sche mute soo."⁷⁹

Although the discord between Margaret and Margery is the most obvious example of a tense mother-daughter relationship, the brief comment that Margaret made about her daughter to John Paston II is far more interesting. She asked that he find a house for Margery to go stay in; "for we be eythere of vs wery of othere."⁸⁰ This may be a hint of the quarrel to come, for Margaret made this comment before the secret marriage is revealed, but perhaps Margaret sensed her daughter's secret. More likely, it simply expresses the frustration of a mother who has a daughter still living at home long after she should have been married (Margery was twenty at this time); there is separation anxiety before the separation actually occurs that increases as the natural date of separation is delayed.

As with Margery Kempe and her son John's wife, Agnes Paston and her daughter-in-law Margaret had a better relationship than either of these women had with their own daughters (there is unfortunately no evidence about how Agnes and Margaret related to their own mothers). Margaret refers to Agnes as "mother" in her letters. This may be a mostly a conventional form of address, however, it still expresses the closeness which developed between the two Paston wives (note that both married into the Paston family; both came in as strangers to this household). Even if it is read it only as convention, it expresses the ideal relationship society hoped would develop between mother and daughter-in-law; one of surrogate motherhood.

Clearly, motherhood and the relationships between women were complicated issues for medieval writers such as the author of *How the Good Wyf Taughte Hir Dougter*. It is a poem that seems to have served several functions, although the anonymity of the author makes it difficult (if not impossible) to know which of these purposes was deliberate and which was coincidental. It is obvious that the poem was designed in part to counsel mothers on the delicate task of raising children, particularly daughters. It is filled with very useful, realistic advice as to what a mother should say to her daughter about how to conduct herself, how to create and manage her own household, even how to raise her own children. The poem could also have been used as a guide for women of non-familial relationships,

⁷⁹ Margaret Paston to her son, John Paston II, vol. I, n. 203, p. 343.

⁸⁰ Margaret Paston to her son, John Paston II, vol. I, n. 201, p. 339.

such as employer to servant, an uncertain relationship in the fifteenth century, during which social roles and class status were changing as the new bourgeois class emerged. However, the poem also helped to shape and instill values and standards of women's behavior in any woman who might read or hear it: be she a mother or a daughter. But the poem is more than an advicebook. It is also a mirror into the actual behavior of mothers, daughters, and women of various social, economic, and generational positions. While illustrating the powerful role motherhood offered to women in a patriarchal society, the poem also reveals that this was not a simple role, and that women had complex relationships between themselves as women, and between themselves and the wider society of the late middle ages.

DELEGITIMIZING LANCASTER:
THE YORKIST USE OF GENDERED PROPAGANDA
DURING THE WARS OF THE ROSES¹

Helen Maurer

Motherhood was the defining moment for a queen consort. The queen who bore an heir fulfilled her primary duty as queen; the other things that she might do or that were expected of her would be either gravy or gall. When Henry VI of England wed Margaret of Anjou in 1445, it was hoped that the couple would soon produce a child and heir. Henry had become king at the tender age of nine months. Compounding the uncertainties of a long minority, neither of his paternal uncles—John, duke of Bedford, deceased, and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, still living—had any legitimate offspring. Whoever became Henry's queen thus bore a special burden of obligation as the vessel through which the continuity of the Lancastrian dynasty would be assured. It was unfortunate for the dynasty and a personal misfortune for Margaret that she did not bear a child until eight-and-a-half years after her arrival in England and that the birth closely followed the final debacle in France and her husband's descent into physical and mental stupor.

Margaret's prolonged failure to provide an heir cost her dearly. As she became more politically active in the wake of the crisis accompanying her son's birth, she also drew attention as a woman out of place. In a world in which women were popularly believed to be faithless, foolish and contrary,² female leadership was an oxymoron, although as a practical matter those who knew them best might regard individual women as capable and trustworthy.³ Within this

¹ These matters are discussed in the broader context of Margaret's career as queen in H. E. Maurer, *Margaret of Anjou: Queenship and Power in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2003).

² E.g., R. H. Robbins, ed., *Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 103, 224; G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford, 1961), pp. 385–403.

³ J. T. Rosenthal, *Patriarchy and Families of Privilege in Fifteenth-Century England* (Philadelphia, 1991), pp. 176–7.

construction a "good" woman was obedient and submissive to her husband, patient, enduring, forgiving, pious and chaste.⁴ A "bad" woman, who acted on her natural female impulses, was disobedient, inconstant, inordinately angry, vengeful and promiscuous.⁵

Chastity was perceived as the nexus linking the other attributes. This emphasis made promiscuity the woman's sin par excellence. In Margaret's case, allegations regarding her sexuality could be used to imply disorder in all other areas of her conduct, as well as to indicate that England itself had abandoned right order.⁶ I will trace how this came about, from the background that made such charges possible, to the origins of rumor and, finally, to its deliberate use in the propaganda battery of her Yorkist enemies.

As a starting point, it may be helpful to dispel some common assumptions that have often colored views of the marriage. In 1445 there was no particular reason to suspect that the union of Henry and Margaret might not prove immediately fruitful. He was twenty-three, she fifteen, when they wed. Both partners appear to have been healthy, normally intelligent and reasonably attractive.⁷ Though Henry VI was regarded as a pious man during his lifetime, his piety does not seem to have been abnormally pronounced or fixated.⁸ Nor ought

⁴ S. Marchalonis, "Above Rubies: Popular Views of Medieval Women," *Journal of Popular Culture* 14 (1980), p. 92.

⁵ H. Institoris and J. Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, tr. with intro. by M. Summers (London, 1969), pp. 44–5; Owst, p. 42, a. 10, for the widely circulated proverb, "Non est ira . . . super iram mulieris."

⁶ For the link between female promiscuity and broader disorder, see C. Levin and P. A. Sullivan, eds., *Political Rhetoric, Power, and Renaissance Women* (Albany 1995), p. 6; G. Bühner-Thierry, "La reine adultère," *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 35 (1992), pp. 299–312. For contemporary advice regarding the queen's sexual behavior, see Jacobus de Cessolis, *Caxton's Game and Playe of the Chesse, 1474*, intro. by W. E. A. Axon (London, 1883), pp. 27, 29, 30–35, 170–1; Christine de Pisan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, tr. with intro. by S. Lawson (New York, 1985), pp. 56, 74–6, 86–7, 89–105, 115–17, 150–2, 171–5.

⁷ For Henry, see R. A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (London, 1981), pp. 231, 241; B. P. Wolfe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), pp. 10, 13, 70, but cf. pp. 16–8, for negative contemporary comments about Henry. It is important to distinguish Henry's poor kingship—which is beyond question—from the absence of any apparent physical or mental deficits prior to 1453. For Margaret, see Wolfe, p. 171; J. J. Bagley, *Margaret of Anjou, Queen of England* (London, 1948), pp. 29, 36.

⁸ J. T. Rosenthal, "Kings, Continuity and Ecclesiastical Benefaction in Fifteenth-Century England," in Rosenthal and C. Richmond, eds., *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages* (Gloucester, 1987), p. 161, observes a continuity in the amount of benefaction by all fifteenth-century English kings. He notes the "creative use of benefaction as spectacle" as a propaganda device to enhance the king's standing in times of insecurity (p. 171). Although Henry's ecclesiastical patronage "is probably a good indication of his priorities," Rosenthal suggests that the relationship between

we to assume uncritically that Henry was pathologically fearful of sex. His outspoken rejection of lust (when he was barely sixteen) and vow to abstain from intercourse outside of marriage may have reflected both the officious posturing and pained sincerity of youth.⁹ Neither one precludes an interest in sex within matrimony. When the marriage hunt was set in motion, the twenty-year-old Henry showed a normal interest in his potential brides. In 1442, as negotiations opened with the count of Armagnac for one of his three daughters, Henry directed his ambassadors to have portraits made of the girls so that he might select the one that he preferred.¹⁰ When these plans fell through and attention shifted to Margaret of Anjou, his interest is unlikely to have been any less.¹¹ Upon Margaret's arrival in England, Henry adopted a chivalric tradition in her family by paying her a visit in disguise.¹²

While it is impossible at this remove to assess the private quality of Henry's and Margaret's marriage or each partner's feelings for the other, they do appear to have gotten on rather well. During the early years of their marriage, prior to 1453, they spent considerable time together.¹³

In other circumstances the length of time it took Henry and Margaret to produce an heir would not have been catastrophic. Richard, duke of York, who eventually challenged Henry's throne, and his duchess had been married for about ten years when they began having children. They wed sometime before October 1429, when he would have been eighteen and she, fourteen years of age.¹⁴

Henry's weakness as king and the extent of his patronage was not accidental (p. 164). Cf. Wolfe, pp. 3–12, Griffiths, pp. 248–50, and R. Lovatt, "A Collector of Apocryphal Anecdotes: John Blacman Revisited," in A. J. Pollard, ed., *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval History* (Gloucester, 1984), pp. 182–88.

⁹ Griffiths, p. 235. The incident was reported by the papal tax collector in England, Piero da Monte, in a letter to the archbishop of Florence (published in A. N. E. D. Schofield, "England and the council of Basel," *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 5:1 [1973], pp. 93–4).

¹⁰ A. R. Myers, ed., *English Historical Documents*, IV (Oxford, 1969), pp. 256–7.

¹¹ The story that he requested a similar portrait of her, however, turns out to be spurious. See B. M. Cron, "The 'Champchevrier Portrait': A Cautionary Tale," *The Ricardian* 12, no. 154 (2001), pp. 321–7.

¹² R. M. Warnicke, "Henry VIII's Greeting of Anne of Cleves and Early Modern Court Protocol," *Albion* 28 (1996), pp. 577, 579–581. Warnicke argues that this visit became the prototype for a later greeting tradition in England. The story of Henry's visit to Margaret is told in *Cal. State Papers . . . Milan*, I, pp. 18–19.

¹³ Griffiths, pp. 257 and 271, n. 133.

¹⁴ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York 1411–1460* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 1–2. The duke was born on 22 September 1411; the duchess on 3 May 1415.

Their first child, a daughter named Anne, was born in August 1439, when Duchess Cecily was twenty-four, a little older than Margaret when her son was born.¹⁵ By the end of 1455 the couple had produced a dozen children.

Nevertheless, the circumstances of Henry's lengthy minority and an heir presumptive without legitimate offspring heightened public sensitivity to this aspect of Margaret's role as queen. Upon Gloucester's death in February 1447 with no sign of a direct heir to Henry on the horizon, the dynastic succession became an even greater question mark. Possible candidates as the next heir presumptive included Richard, duke of York, Edmund Beaufort, soon to be duke of Somerset, and John Holand, duke of Exeter.¹⁶ Of the three, York alone could claim descent from Edward III through a legitimate male line; Exeter and Somerset were "tainted" by inheritance through either a female or a bastard line.¹⁷ But if inheritance through a female was permitted, then York had an additional claim that was better than Henry's own—a claim that he eventually made. Margaret's failure to produce the anticipated heir as promptly as many would have hoped exacerbated the insecurities inherent in this situation.¹⁸

Rumors about the couple's failure to produce a child began to surface as early as October 1446, one year into the marriage. Initially, blame was cast upon Bishop Aiscough of Salisbury, the earl of Suffolk, and others for keeping Henry from having "his sport" with the queen.¹⁹ Though the charge may seem foolish, it was well known by this time that early childbearing brought added danger to the mother.²⁰ So

¹⁵ *The Complete Peerage*, V, p. 213, note g. Margaret was born on 23 March 1430 (C. N. L. Brooke and V. Ortenberg, "The Birth of Margaret of Anjou," *Historical Research* 61 [1988], pp. 357–8); her son, on 13 October 1453.

¹⁶ For a discussion of this vexed issue and of the contemporary importance of lineage, see Griffiths, "The Sense of Dynasty in the Reign of Henry VI," in C. Ross, ed., *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979), especially pp. 13–23; cf. Johnson, pp. 99–100.

¹⁷ The Beaufort children of John of Gaunt, legitimated in 1397, had been excluded from the royal succession in 1407 (*Cal. Patent Rolls, 1396–99*, p. 86; *Cal. Patent Rolls, 1405–8*, p. 284). Theoretically, at least, this exclusion could have been reversed. M. K. Jones and M. G. Underwood, *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 23–4, discuss this issue.

¹⁸ Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 675, discusses the problem of the succession as it impinged on York.

¹⁹ Wolffe, p. 17, citing PRO, KB9/260/85.

²⁰ J. C. Parsons, "Mothers, Daughters, Marriage, Power: Some Plantagenet Evidence, 1150–1500," in Parsons, ed., *Medieval Queenship* (Stroud, 1994), pp. 63, 65–8; cf. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 256.

there may have been a grain of truth to it. In 1448 a disgruntled felon held in Canterbury gaol accused his neighbor in the isle of Thanet of complaining that "oure queen was non abyll to be Quene of Ingland . . . because that sche bereth no child, and because that we have no pryns in this land."²¹ Since the felon also accused his neighbor of coin clipping and of selling wool to smugglers, his primary concern may have been to implicate the neighbor in *something*, most likely to mitigate his own sentence. Nevertheless, the accusation of treasonable language constitutes a credible charge. Like the coins and the wool, it would have represented a kind of thing known to be going on, whether the neighbor was actually guilty or not.

The imprisonment in 1451 of Thomas Young, one of the duke of York's councillors, illustrates the aggravation of political tensions at the center as a result of Margaret's continuing failure to produce a child. Young had proposed in parliament that York be formally recognized as heir presumptive. This would have intensified existing rivalry between the dukes of York and Somerset. If it also implied that the queen was barren, it would have insulted Margaret as well.²²

In this atmosphere Margaret would have felt increasingly pressured to produce an heir. On 1 January 1453, the queen's "year's gifts" included an offering for the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, which was associated with supplications involving pregnancy and childbirth.²³ Her gift of a gold tablet with the image of an angel holding a cross, embellished with pearls, sapphires and rubies, was her costliest that year apart from her gift to the king.²⁴ Several months later, in April, she visited the shrine.²⁵ Although January would have

²¹ *Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fifth Report*, p. 455a, citing M. 238, 1448 in the dean and chapter of Canterbury Archives.

²² As suggested by M. K. Jones, "Somerset, York and the Wars of the Roses," *English Historical Review* 104 (1989), p. 289 and n. 2.

²³ D. J. Hall, *English Medieval Pilgrimage* (London, 1965), p. 122, attributes the later interest in Walsingham of Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon to their "longing for a male heir." Henry visited the shrine immediately after the birth of his son in 1511 and sent it more offerings after the child died. Two years later Katherine wrote of her plans to go on pilgrimage there, as she had long since promised.

²⁴ A. R. Myers, "The Jewels of Queen Margaret of Anjou," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 42 (1959-60), pp. 115, 124.

²⁵ C. Rawcliffe, "Richard, Duke of York, the King's 'obesant Liegeman,'" *Historical Research* 60 (1987), pp. 232-9, for a letter from the duchess of York to Margaret that speaks of their meeting after Margaret left the shrine. For the correct date of Margaret's visit, see N. Davis, ed., *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, I, (Oxford, 1971), pp. 248-9; Johnson, p. 122, n. 110.

been too early for Margaret to know that she was pregnant, she may have been hopeful.²⁶ Thus, the gift to Walsingham looks like a pledge-in-advance, and Margaret's visit fits a typical pattern of giving personal thanks at the appropriate shrine after the miracle or cure had taken place.²⁷

News of the queen's condition was received with signs of genuine joy and, no doubt, of relief. Henry expressed his own pleasure in a lifetime annuity of £40 to Richard Tunstall, the esquire of the body who informed him of it.²⁸ He also obtained a "demy ceynt"—identified in the warrant as a jewel of some sort—for Margaret during her pregnancy.²⁹ Henry would not learn of the child's actual birth until the end of 1454 upon his recovery from illness, and he was clearly happy then to find that he had a son.³⁰

Positive feeling extended well beyond the immediate circle of Henry and the court. When Cecily, duchess of York, wrote to the queen in the latter half of 1453, she described the child whom Margaret was carrying as "the most precious, most ioyfull, and most comfortable erthely tresor that myght come unto this land and to the people therof" and wished that God might send the queen further offspring "for the . . . suerty and wele of this realme."³¹ There is no reason to suspect insincerity. From Duchess Cecily's point of view, the presence of a direct heir to the king would eliminate the question of whether or not the duke was heir presumptive, which had been a source of suspicion and a focus of rivalry. Her husband's claim to be the king's "obeisant liegeman" despite his pointed criticism of the government would become more credible as it became more difficult to charge that he was driven by personal ambition.³²

²⁶ If the birth was a week overdue, it was "just possible" for Margaret to have suspected something at the beginning of January, though hopefulness has never had to depend upon suspicion! I am grateful to Claire W. Culver, C.N.P., for her calculations in this matter.

²⁷ R. C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (London, 1977), p. 92.

²⁸ *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, V, p. 318, reports the annuity in Tunstall's exemption from the act of resumption of 1455.

²⁹ J. Stevenson, ed., *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Wars of the English in France*, II, ii (London, 1864), pp. 507–8.

³⁰ J. Gairdner, ed., *The Paston Letters*, III (1904), p. 13.

³¹ Rawcliffe, "Richard, Duke of York," p. 237.

³² By this time York had become an outspoken critic of the duke of Somerset over the latter's role in Normandy.

More striking and significant, however, were parliament's protection and continuation of Margaret's existing privileges and the grant to her by charter of new ones in July: full royal judicial rights on her estates and a life-right to all moveables forfeited to the king.³³ Professor Griffiths has noted the extraordinary nature of the latter grant, but his attribution of it to Margaret's "good relations with the king and her good accord with this parliament" somewhat understates the case.³⁴ Certainly, by the end of July the queen's pregnancy would have been known, and it seems likely that in some sense the grant was her reward.

Then, in the month of August, Henry unexpectedly suffered a complete mental breakdown that left him unable to communicate or to understand what was said to him for more than a year. In spite of this sudden complication, or perhaps to preserve a sense that all was well, plans for the much-anticipated birth went forward. On 10 September the mayor and aldermen of London turned out in scarlet to convey Margaret ceremoniously by water to Westminster for her lying-in.³⁵ There on 13 October she gave birth to a son who was promptly named Edward in honor of the Confessor. Bells were rung.³⁶ Giles St Loo, Margaret's butler and usher of her chamber who brought the news to London, received a purse from the common council containing ten marks sterling.³⁷ Messengers carried the news to Canterbury and, we may presume, to other parts of the kingdom as well.³⁸ On the 14th, Bishop Waynfilet of Winchester, Henry's confessor, baptized the prince, while Cardinal Kempe, archbishop of Canterbury and chancellor of England, the duke of Somerset and the duchess of Buckingham stood as his godparents.³⁹ There was no stinting on ceremony. Ten pounds were spent on wax candles, while a total of £554 16s. 8d. was paid for the infant's embroidered

³³ *Rot. Par.*, V, pp. 229, 258–263; *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1447–54*, pp. 390–2; *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1452–61*, pp. 114–6.

³⁴ Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 261; see also Johnson, p. 123, n. 114.

³⁵ CLRO, Journal V, f. 120.

³⁶ R. Flenley, ed., *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles* (Oxford, 1911), p. 140.

³⁷ CLRO, Journal V, f. 125b; for his career see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 782, and A. R. Myers, "The Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou, 1452–3," *BJRL* 40 (1957–8), p. 405.

³⁸ W. G. Searle, ed., *The Chronicle of John Stone, Monk of Christ Church, 1415–1471* (Cambridge, 1902), p. 87.

³⁹ *Ibid.*; J. S. Davies, ed., *An English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI* (repr. New York, 1968), p. 70.

chrisom-cloth, along with 20 yards of russet cloth of gold and 540 brown sable-backs, probably for the queen's churching.⁴⁰

Among the various chronicle reports of the prince's birth, only one strikes a note of skepticism. All others, even the strongly Yorkist *English Chronicle*, treat it matter-of-factly.⁴¹ The single exception to this rule, "Bale's Chronicle," which also happens to provide the most elaborate account of the prince's birth, notes that "peple spake strangely" about it.⁴² The strange talk alluded to may have involved a number of things: the length of time that it had taken the king and queen to produce an heir, the recent loss of France and its implications for the infant's future, or uncertainties regarding the king's health being the more obvious.⁴³ Although I suppose that it might have involved questions regarding the child's legitimacy, there is no particular reason to believe that it did. And it is clear from the passage as a whole that the chronicler assumed the child to be the legitimate heir.⁴⁴

Several years later, however, explicit allegations about the prince and his mother began to appear. On 23 February 1456, one John Helton was drawn, hanged and quartered for making bills alleging that Prince Edward was not the *queen's* son.⁴⁵ This incident did not occur within a contextual vacuum. Two days later the duke of York was forced to resign his second protectorate. Helton's execution is indicative of rising tensions amid the political jockeying for position that accompanied the king's resumption of authority. Margaret was undoubtedly one of the persons, if not the chief person, lobbying for York's ouster. The events of the past year, from the battle of St.

⁴⁰ Myers, "Household of Queen Margaret," p. 425 and nn. 4 and 5. See M. A. Hookham, *The Life and Times of Margaret of Anjou*, I (London, 1872), p. 435, for texts of the issue roll entries.

⁴¹ Davies, *English Chron.*, p. 70: "the furst sone of kyng Harry [was born]." Cf., C. L. Kingsford, ed., *The Chronicles of London* (Oxford, 1905), p. 163: "the Quene was delyuered of a fair Prynce"; also G. L. and M. A. Harriss, eds., "John Benet's Chronicle for the Years 1400 to 1462," *Camden Miscellany* 24, 4th ser., vol. 9, p. 210; J. Gairdner, ed., *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicals* Camden Society n.s. 28 (London, 1880), pp. 69, 149; A. H. Thomas and I. D. Thornley, eds., *The Great Chronicle of London* (repr. Gloucester, 1983), p. 186.

⁴² Flenley, p. 141.

⁴³ Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 721, suggests an attempt to cover up Henry's illness. It seems unlikely that no word at all would have slipped out that something was amiss, and the author of "Bale's Chronicle" was a Londoner (C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* [Oxford, 1913], pp. 95–6).

⁴⁴ Flenley, p. 140: "the queen . . . at Westminster had a prince."

⁴⁵ Harriss, p. 216: "Edwardus princeps non fuit filius regine."

Albans to the establishment of the second protectorate, had given her ample reason to regard him with suspicion. While York still clung to the protectorate, a newsletter of 9 February reported that his discharge had been expected that day, but that the duke's appearance at parliament together with the earl of Warwick and 300 armed men left matters unresolved. Though some said that King Henry was amenable to keeping York as his "chief and principall counsellor" during pleasure, the appearance of the Yorkists in arms had given others second thoughts. Opinion divided on whether York would keep his protectorate on its original terms or not. The writer concluded this portion of his letter with the pithy observation that "the Quene is a grete and strong labourid woman, for she spareth noo peyne to sue hire thinges to an intent and conclusion to hir power."⁴⁶ While I have found no direct link between York and Helton, the latter's charges seem very much a part of this ongoing dynamic.

Over the course of the next year, Margaret's labors paid off. When the court moved to Coventry in autumn, the officers of state left over from York's protectorate were replaced by persons whose loyalty to Henry was beyond question or who in the case of Lawrence Booth, new keeper of the privy seal, was one of Margaret's protégées. But Margaret also took steps to emphasize the propriety of her queenship. A grand pageant welcoming her to Coventry voluminously praised her motherhood and honored her as the king's wife.⁴⁷ One may wonder to what extent this display served as a riposte to continuing gossip as well as an expression of the queen's increasing prominence.

For we know that rumors were still circulating in 1457. In late March the London common council warned the city companies not to meddle in affairs touching the king, queen or prince, but to curb their tongues and not utter any unseemly, scandalous or disgraceful words at their peril.⁴⁸ The warning followed a Coventry meeting of the king's council in which York was berated for "inquieting" the realm.⁴⁹ In October a royal commission went to Norfolk to inquire into "any treasons, misprisions, insolences or slanders . . . against the

⁴⁶ Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, III, pp. 74–5: John Bocking to Sir John Fastolf.

⁴⁷ M. D. Harris, *The Coventry Leet Book*, Early English Text Society, o.s. (London, 1907–13), pp. 286–92.

⁴⁸ CLRO, Journal VI, f. 117b.

⁴⁹ *Rot. Par.*, V, p. 347.

king's person or majesty or royalty and against the persons and honour of queen Margaret and prince Edward."⁵⁰ Although the exact nature of the gossip is unspecified, it is difficult to imagine anything other than allegations concerning lineage and legitimacy that would impinge upon the honor of a three-year-old prince and his mother.

At the end of the decade, probably following the Yorkists' attainders in autumn 1459, such allegations can be identified as an active part of their propaganda. Instead of questioning Margaret's motherhood, however, they denied her chastity. It may be that her failure to bear further children contributed to these rumors: prostitutes—who engaged in frequent and promiscuous sex—were widely believed to be infertile.⁵¹ The earliest clearly identifiable allusions to the queen's promiscuity are blunt statements made by the earl of Warwick in Calais during the spring of 1460 and duly reported to Pius II by the legate, Francesco Coppini, who had attached himself to Warwick's entourage. According to Coppini, Warwick called Henry "a dolt and a fool," whose power lay "in the hands of his wife and those who defile the king's chamber."⁵² Underlying the charge of promiscuity is the assertion that public order had been subverted through private transgression. The king is betrayed by his wife; she and her lovers hold power that should be his.⁵³

Around the same time, rumors concerning Margaret's morality and the prince's legitimacy were current in England. The pronouns in this passage from the *English Chronicle* are confusing and require close attention. It reports that "the quene was defamed and desclaundered, that he that was called Prince, was nat *hire* sone, but a bastard gotten in avoutry." Moreover, fearing that the prince "shulde nat succeed *hys* fadre in the crowne of Englonde, [she was] . . . making pryue menyys to some of the lordes . . . to styre the kyng that he shulde resygne the croune to *hyre* sone."⁵⁴ Although the passage may

⁵⁰ *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1452–61*, p. 404.

⁵¹ Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 92.

⁵² Pius II, *The Commentaries of Pius II: Books II and III*, II, tr. F. A. Gragg with intro. and notes by L. C. Gabel, *Smith Studies in History* 25 (Northampton, Mass., 1939–40), p. 269. C. Head, "Pius II and the Wars of the Roses," *Archivum Historiae Pontificae* 8 (1970), p. 145, believes that this section of the *Commentaries* was written after Henry's deposition in March 1461.

⁵³ See Bühner-Thierry, pp. 299, 301, 302–4, 311–12, for the association of the queen's adultery with public disorder.

⁵⁴ Davies, pp. 79–80, emphasis added, which vaguely attributes the rumor to

be understood in a way compatible with the claim that the prince was a changeling, the gist of it seems to charge Margaret with adultery. Or perhaps public rumors at this time were somewhat vague. There is no independent evidence that Margaret ever contemplated Henry's abdication, though rumors that she had would resurface soon after his deposition. What is more important in this and adjacent passages is the implied connection between sexual transgression and misdirection of the realm:

The reame of Englonde was oute of alle good gouernaunce, as it had be meny dayes before, for the kyng was simple and lad by couetous counseylle . . . The queen with such as were of her affynyte rewled the reame as her liked, gaderyng ryches innumerable.⁵⁵

Thus, disorder in the royal family is accompanied by disorder in the realm.

On 26 June, the earls of Warwick, Salisbury and March crossed from Calais to Sandwich. Their invasion was preceded by a letter sent to the archbishop of Canterbury and the commons generally, asserting the dreadful state of affairs in England, the Yorkists' own victimization, their loyalty to Henry, and their determination to set matters straight.⁵⁶ Meanwhile, a ballad appeared tacked to the gates of Canterbury, written by a Yorkist sympathizer if not by someone privy to their less guarded words and thoughts. Its second verse complains of "fals heryres fostred," surely a reference to the prince, and contrasts this in the next line to the "unryghtewys dysherytyng" of the Yorkist lords.⁵⁷ Juxtaposed to the lack of any reference to either Margaret or the prince in the Yorkists' letter, one might ask just where this was leading.⁵⁸

The answer came soon after the battle of Northampton. By mid-July it was reported on the Continent that the Yorkists were "beginning

1459–60. The order in which the chronicler reports events is somewhat muddled here. Age-based changes taking place in the prince's life in the early months of 1460 could have lent credence to rumors that he was about to replace Henry (Maurer, *Margaret of Anjou*, p. 177).

⁵⁵ Davies, p. 79. The earls of Shrewsbury and Wiltshire and Viscount Beaumont were most often mentioned as the king's evil advisors.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 86–90; Johnson, pp. 201–3, who concludes that the letter made credible propaganda, discusses the charges and their public resonance in detail.

⁵⁷ Davies, pp. 91–2. The ballad continues to p. 94. R. H. Robbins, ed., *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (New York, 1959), pp. 207–10, 369–71, both prints and discusses it.

⁵⁸ Johnson, p. 204, finds it deliberately evasive.

already to say that [Prince Edward was] not the king's son" and that they would "pass over" him to make one of York's sons king in his place.⁵⁹

How, then, did the initial rumor that the prince was a changeling turn into the very different charge that he was the bastard son of an adulterous queen? Why the shift in view regarding both the nature of the prince's "disability" and the nature of the queen's "transgression"?

It seems likely that the earlier rumor's inception lay in some offhand remark about how long it had taken Margaret to conceive. Since women generally bore the blame for infertility, some contemporaries may have thought that if it had taken her so long, the child could not possibly be hers. In 1456, when Margaret began to move against York and to "interfere" in public policy, any such doubts would have been ready at hand. The actual allegation that the prince was a changeling would have served a double purpose. First, it attacked Margaret directly as a woman: she could not do what a proper woman would do, which was to have a baby. But also, obliquely, it drew attention to the impropriety of what she was doing "instead."

As politics polarized between a Yorkist faction and a more amorphous group of Lancastrian loyalists with Margaret as their shadow leader, and as the stakes in the conflict escalated, the rumor was co-opted by the Yorkists with a corresponding shift in content to serve a particular political agenda.

There were two main reasons for this shift. First, allusions to infidelity and sexual promiscuity constituted charges that were particularly and uniquely damaging to a woman's reputation. Christine de Pizan recognized this reality in her advice to women, again and again returning to the value of chastity.⁶⁰ She also noted that "the greater a lady is, the more is her honour or dishonour celebrated through the country than that of another ordinary woman."⁶¹ Thus, allegations of adultery were potentially damning to Margaret; insinuations of disorderly sexuality suggested that all other aspects of her conduct and activities were disorderly as well. The label of sexual transgression effectively defined her as a woman out of place.⁶²

Second, and even more important, when order within the royal

⁵⁹ *Cal. State Papers, Milan*, I, p. 27.

⁶⁰ Christine, pp. 56, 74–6, 86–7, 89–105, 115–17, 150–2, 171–5. See also the essay by Candace Gregory in this volume.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

⁶² M. Howell, *Eleanor of Provence* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 149–150, for the use of personal slander to discredit an earlier queen; N. Macdougall, *James III: A Political Study*

family was upset through the queen's adultery, could any wonder that disorder afflicted the larger realm? Charges of sexual transgression were used to bolster perceptions of misrule, while labeling Prince Edward a bastard undermined his claim to present and future loyalty, paving the way for drastic change. The charge of bastardy was more difficult to counter than the notion that he was a changeling. Too many people had known of Margaret's pregnancy and could attest that she had given birth. Fatherhood was another matter. Once doubt was sown, it was not so easily dismissed. Combined with rumors that Henry was being encouraged to abdicate, it prepared the ground for immediate consideration of an alternative succession. This suggests that the later rumor was spread in response to a decision already made: to replace Lancaster with York. Its perceived success is confirmed by the use of similar allegations to challenge Edward IV's right to the throne in 1469 and to undermine the succession of his children in 1483.⁶³

But the invading Yorkists still faced certain obstacles. A further propaganda theme, which had gotten the earls from Calais to Northampton and beyond, had consisted of repeated affirmations of their loyalty to Henry. When parliament met in autumn, he had reigned for thirty-seven years. This, together with the oath that so many had sworn to him at Coventry the year before, made it very difficult to support his deposition. The eventual settlement, arrived at only after sleepless nights and much prodding, allowed Henry to keep the crown for the remainder of his life, with succession to York and his heirs.⁶⁴ The formal record observed with a virtual sigh of relief that "othes . . . [were] saved, and [the lords'] consciences therin clered."⁶⁵

(Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 54, 56, for rumors of sexual promiscuity used against Margaret's contemporary, Mary of Guelders; C. Levin, "Power, Politics, and Sexuality: Images of Elizabeth I," in J. R. Brink, et al., *The Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Kirkville, Mo., 1989), pp. 95–110, but esp. pp. 97 and 101–2, for similar criticism of Elizabeth I.

⁶³ In 1469, it was rumored on the continent that the earl of Warwick had charged that Edward IV was a bastard in order to raise the duke of Clarence to the throne (J. Calmette and G. Périnelle, *Louis XI et L'Angleterre* (Paris, 1930), pp. 306–7). The charge resurfaced in the accusations made against Clarence in his treason trial, and was apparently considered at the time of Richard III's usurpation before it was decided to claim that Edward's marriage was bigamous and his children bastards (M. Hicks, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence* (Gloucester, 1980), pp. 162–3; D. Mancini, *The Usurpation of Richard III*, ed. C. A. J. Armstrong, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1969), pp. 95–7).

⁶⁴ Johnson, p. 213; *Rot. Par.*, V, pp. 375–7, for the difficulties in obtaining agreement.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 377–8.

The disinheritance of Prince Edward appears to have met no resistance; at least, none was recorded. Although an oath had also been sworn to him the year before, rumors of his bastardy may have softened incipient support for him. Formal acceptance of the legitimacy of York's claim, belied by the general unwillingness to disavow oaths made to Henry, theoretically removed any need to consider the rumors' truth or falsehood more carefully. He was, in any event, a mere child of seven compared with York's eldest sons and likely heirs, aged seventeen and eighteen respectively. And the settlement delicately allowed that it might please Henry "to ley from hym" the crown before his natural lifespan reached its end.⁶⁶ The odds that York or his nearly mature sons could consolidate power before Prince Edward became a threat in his own right may not have seemed overly daunting.

But, as often happens, events took their own course. The Yorkists' attempt to lure Margaret to London with her son failed miserably.⁶⁷ Their carelessness and complacency in approaching the growing Lancastrian threat in the North cost York, his son Rutland and the earl of Salisbury their lives at Wakefield. With letters already arriving in London from the disaffected Lancastrians announcing their intent to rescue the king—including one in the prince's name asserting his rightful and lineal descent⁶⁸—propaganda again moved to the forefront.

Existing Yorkist rumors that the Lancastrians' true purpose was to despoil London and the South received fresh impetus.⁶⁹ Behind them lay real fear that Margaret and her army would find support en route. It is palpable in a series of commissions aimed at preventing demonstrations, recruitment and provisioning by Lancastrian sympathizers.⁷⁰ At this time another element appeared in the propaganda mix: the marauding army was specifically made up of Northerners—of strangers and barbarians—who could be counted on to run amuck.⁷¹ Without

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

⁶⁷ J. Gairdner, ed., *Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century* (Camden Society, n.s. 17 (London, 1876), p. 209; *Cal. State Papers, Milan*, I, p. 38, for Coppini's separate effort to induce Margaret to come to terms.

⁶⁸ BL, MS. Add. 48031A, f. 31–31b, now published and discussed in M. L. Kekewich, et al., *The Politics of Fifteenth-Century England: John Vale's Book* (Stroud, 1995), pp. 36–7, 142–3. The letter was written while York was still alive.

⁶⁹ Referred to in the prince's letter, *ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1452–61*, pp. 655–9. A. Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses: Military Activity and English Society* (London, 1981), pp. 44–5, discusses support for Margaret.

⁷¹ E.g., H. T. Riley, ed., *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland* (London, 1854),

denying that depredations did occur as Margaret's army marched south, it is also true that tales of Lancastrian atrocities lost nothing in the telling. In London at the end of January, to aid in raising a defensive force, Warwick and the Yorkist government deliberately stoked fears of "mysruled and outerageous people in the north parties . . . coming toward these parties to the destruccion thereof . . . and subversion of all our lande."⁷² The references to misrule, malice, and wanton destruction, though usually understood as regional bias, can also be read within a gendered context. The reversal of right order implicit in female leadership, the ill will and anger believed to characterize the transgressive woman: all are supported by the same complaints that were directed against northern barbarians. Combined by rhetoric, gender and regional bias made a natural-seeming and very potent mixture.

Margaret's inability to capitalize on her victory at Second St. Albans and the well-orchestrated acclamation of Edward IV in London did not provide the Yorkists with unqualified victory. It remained for Edward to prove that he could keep his crown. In the early days of March this was not yet certain. With the retreat of Margaret's army, appeals to public fears of Northerners began to lose their impact, and allegations of sexual disorder again came into play. In early March there were reports that Margaret and the duke of Somerset had persuaded Henry to abdicate in favor of the prince, whereupon the queen, prince, and duke abandoned him.⁷³ A few days later further rumors alleged that the queen had poisoned Henry and that she would "unite with" Somerset.⁷⁴ Such charges of faithlessness, murder and implied promiscuity defined Margaret as a woman unworthy of respect or support in any capacity and cast doubt upon the legitimacy of any child born to her. Moreover, they characterized the remaining Lancastrian enterprise as illicit and contrary to the order established by God. Since Henry was very much alive and

pp. 421–2; Gairdner, *Three . . . Chrons.*, p. 155; H. T. Riley, ed., *Registrum abbatiae Johannis Whethamstede*, I, Rolls Series (1872), pp. 386–401; I argue elsewhere that the army cannot be characterized as strictly "northern" and that the primary reason for its pillaging was lack of food supply (Maurer, pp. 192–4).

⁷² N. H. Nicolas, ed., *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, VI (London, 1837), pp. 307–10.

⁷³ *Cal. State Papers, Milan*, I, p. 55. The Somerset in question would have been Henry Beaufort, son of Edmund, who had been killed in the first battle of St Albans in 1455. He had become the Lancastrians' military commander.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58 (15 March).

in Margaret's company, these rumors were probably short-lived.

They were replaced by a direct attack on the prince's legitimacy. On 27 March, the Milanese ambassador, Prospero di Camulio, still puzzling over reports of Henry's abdication, noted a further rumor that "his Majesty [Henry VI] remarked at another time, that [Prince Edward] must be the son of the Holy Spirit, etc." Camulio dismissively labeled such talk as no more than "the words of common fanatics, such as they have at present in that island."⁷⁵ By contrasting this rumor with a contemporary Yorkist verse that characterizes the newly acclaimed Edward IV as "conseived in wedlock, and comyn of blode ryall,"⁷⁶ we are better able to see its purpose. Both are different sides of the same coin: the one denigrates the old king and his dynasty, while the other celebrates the new.

For the next several years, while Henry remained at large and Margaret tried to obtain foreign support, the Yorkists continued to promote heavily gendered images of disorder under the Lancastrians to contrast with the "order" that they were busily establishing. In 1462, in anticipation of a pro-Lancastrian invasion, a popular poem proclaimed:

It ys Right a gret abusion,
A woman of a land to be a Regent—
Quene margrete I mene, that ever hath ment
To gouerne all engeland with might and poure,
And to destroy the Ryght lyne was here entent . . .

And now [she's doing it again],
Though all engeland were brought to confusion;
Sche and here wykked affynite certayne
Entende uttyrly to destroy thys regioun;
Ffor with theym ys but Deth & destruccioun,
Robberye & vengeaunce . . .⁷⁷

and so on. Meanwhile, wildly exaggerated rumors suggested that Margaret would raise a force in the hundreds of thousands, including all the crowned heads of continental Europe! Confusion, destruction, invading "strangers"—this is what happens when a woman leads. The actual invasion in October involved less than 1000 men.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* Towton was on 29 March.

⁷⁶ Robbins, *Historical Poems*, pp. 219 and 380, note 35.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁷⁸ Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, IV, p. 32, gives a rumored figure of 120,000 men; Gairdner *Three . . . Chrons.*, p. 158: 250,000 men; see Wolfe, p. 334, for the realistic figure.

A further poem, which probably followed the battles of Hedgeley Moor and Hexham in 1464, spells out Henry VI's—and Lancaster's—failure in gendered terms. In it Henry complains:

I wedded a wife at my devise
That was the cause of all my moan.
To her intent said I never nay
Therefore I mourn and nothing am merry.⁷⁹

In bowing to her will, gender roles were reversed, and this reversal is claimed to have brought all manner of ills upon the kingdom. With the capture and imprisonment of Henry in 1465, such commentary appears to have ceased. It was no longer needed.

Though it is not implausible that a queen in Margaret's situation might have had an extramarital affair, there is no concrete evidence that she did.⁸⁰ Nor is there any concrete reason to believe that Prince Edward was not both Henry's and Margaret's child. Contrary to rumor, Henry appears to have behaved in all respects as if he thought the child were his.⁸¹ Yet it is easy to see how such charges would find a use in Yorkist propaganda at the point when it was beginning to promote the superiority of York's lineage to Henry's. They also provided a gendered criticism of the Yorkists' leading opponent, a "grete and strong labourid woman" who was perceived to have transgressed the boundaries of her proper place and thereby thrown the realm into disorder.

These images were perpetuated by Edward IV's first parliament. As its very first item of business, Edward IV was commended for proceeding against "Margarete late called Quene of England, *hir* sone Edward" and others, who had intended the destruction of the realm with the aid of northerners, along with enemy Scots and French.⁸² Next came Henry's attainder. He was charged with dissimulation in accepting the settlement and deliberately breaking his oath to the Yorkists, in particular by adhering to Margaret and assenting to her activities.⁸³ Margaret was then convicted of the "transgressions and

⁷⁹ Robbins, *Secular Lyrics*, p. 197.

⁸⁰ It must be conceded, however, that such an affair could not have been allowed to leave traces; it would have been covered up.

⁸¹ C. L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward IV*, II (London, 1923), p. 463, for a message from Henry expressing concern for his wife and son in 1464, while he was at Bamburgh and they were in France.

⁸² *Rot. Par.*, V, p. 462, emphasis added.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 476.

offences aforespecified, committed ayenst her feith and Liegeaunce to . . . oure Soverayne and Liege Lord Kyng Edward,” and attainted.⁸⁴ In this way, references to Prince Edward’s “bastardy” were preserved. And, while acknowledging the queen’s status as the Yorkists’ prime adversary, the language of the charges depicted and diminished Margaret, who had taken no oaths except her marriage vows to Henry, as a “contrary” woman, guilty of sexual transgression and of faithless—female?—mutability.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 479.

BLOOD AND ROSES: MAYTIME AND REVIVAL IN THE *MORTE DARTHUR*

Karen Bezella-Bond

In the past decade, many scholars have lamented the embattled and marginalized state of medieval studies.¹ In a recent response to these sentiments, Nicholas Watson has encouraged medievalists to reaffirm an emotional involvement with their objects of study, to embrace “the role of affect in thinking about the past.”² Watson urges us to acknowledge that “the scholarly quest . . . takes the past as the object of a desire we can only partly satisfy but which we also cannot set aside.”³ Further, Watson contends, we should recognize that this mode of thought, which Watson calls “affective historicity,”⁴ actually governs some of the medieval texts that we study. Drawing on the work of Karl Morrison,⁵ Watson notes the long Western tradition of empathetic knowing in which seekers “come to understand something by desiring it, setting out to be like it, becoming like it, and, finally, seeking to fuse with it” only to confront the frustrating impossibility of complete union.⁶ For medievalists, the most familiar example of such striving is, of course, the *imitatio Christi*, and Watson insightfully compares the scholar’s quest for a “bodely sight” of the past to the medieval mystic’s quest for God, citing Juliana of Norwich:

¹ For discussions of and responses to this trend, see Anne Middleton, “Medieval Studies,” in *Redrawing the Boundaries: The Transformation of English and American Literary Studies*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn (New York: MLA, 1992), 12–40; Mary Carruthers, “Micrological Aggregates: Is the New Chaucer Society Speaking in Tongues?” *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 21 (1999): 1–26; and Nicholas Howe, “The Center on the Margin, or Self-Fulfilling Prophecies for Medievalists,” *Das Mittelalter* 4 (1999): 103–8.

² “Desire for the Past,” *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 21 (1999): 72.

³ Watson, 61–62.

⁴ Watson, 93.

⁵ See especially *I Am You: The Hermeneutics of Empathy in Western Literature, Theology, and Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

⁶ Watson, 73–74.

... I desyred a bodely sight, wher in I might have more knowledge of the bodily paynes of our Saviour, and of the compassion of our lady and of all his true lovers that were lyvyng that tyme and saw his paynes; for I would have be one of them and have suffered with them.⁷

Juliana's desire to be bodily present at the Crucifixion can be compared not only to the scholarly enterprise but to another desire: that of the medieval reenactor, who attempts to embody a medieval person by donning a costume, preparing a feast, or imitating a festival. We may take offense at the historical inaccuracy of some reenactments, and my comparison of the *imitatio Christi* to the weekend jousts of the Society for Creative Anachronism may seem presumptuous. However, despite our frequent condescension towards Renaissance Faires and SCA feasts, the gap between the passions of medieval enthusiasts and our scholarly passions may not be as wide as we would like to believe.⁸ Maintaining such a gap, refusing to acknowledge that medieval reenactment may be, on some level, as valid an encounter with the Middle Ages as manuscript studies, may ultimately prove counterproductive. Further, it may blind us to moments of reenactment in the very documents we study.

The Middle Ages was full of reenactors, reenacting more than Christ's Passion. In fifteenth-century England, Arthurian romances were undergoing a revival, attracting readers from the aristocracy, the lower gentry, and the rising merchant class. The devotees of these romances also tried to live them, remembering the Arthurian court by, in effect, reenacting the Arthurian court. Courtiers looked back to the customs and ceremonies of a quasi-historical Arthurian world, drawing on romances and manuals of chivalry for models of conduct, and organizing tournaments and chivalric societies around Arthurian themes.⁹ This fifteenth-century interest in Arthuriana may

⁷ *A Book of Showings to the Anchoress Julian of Norwich*, ed. Edmund Colledge and James Walsh, 2 vols. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978), 2:285–86, quoted in Watson, 59.

⁸ See Kathleen Biddick, *The Shock of Medievalism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998); and L. O. Aranye Fradenburg's review of Biddick's book, *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 22 (2000): 456–62.

⁹ Surviving manuscripts, library inventories, and bequests attest to the popularity of chivalric romances in England during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. For a discussion of some of this evidence and Malory's access to French romances, see Carol Meale, "Manuscripts, Readers and Patrons in Fifteenth-Century England: Sir Thomas Malory and Arthurian Romance," *Arthurian Literature* 4 (1985): 93–126. Maurice Keen discusses chivalric societies modeled on the Round Table, such as

have responded in part to England's recent demoralizing loss of its French holdings and in part to the destabilizing feuds among the English nobility and gentry.

In this article, I will consider one fifteenth-century text that both partook of and contributed to Arthurian revival: Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*, completed in 1469 or 1470 and printed by William Caxton in 1485.¹⁰ A knight who was accused of various crimes and who spent several years as a prisoner, Sir Thomas Malory was directly acquainted with diminished prestige, shifting loyalties, and political discontent.¹¹ In the quasi-historical project that is the *Morte Darthur*,¹² Malory confronts us with a desire for the past very like the affective

Edward III's Order of the Garter, founded in 1348 (*Chivalry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 179–204). Also useful are Johan Huizinga's chapter, "The Heroic Dream," in *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsh (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 61–125; and Arthur Ferguson, *The Indian Summer of English Chivalry* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1960), 13–23.

¹⁰ The *Morte* survives in one manuscript dating from the 1470s (the Winchester Manuscript, British Library Additional MS 59678, discovered in 1934) and in two copies of Caxton's edition. The Caxton version was frequently reprinted and enjoyed great popularity during the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. See P. J. C. Field, "Sir Thomas Malory," in *The New Arthurian Encyclopedia*, ed. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland, 1991), 294–95.

¹¹ Three Thomas Malorys have been proposed as authors of the *Morte*; the strongest candidate is currently Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel, a member of the lower gentry whose life has been thoroughly researched by P. J. C. Field. For details about the life of Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel and a list of the major contributions to the authorship debate, see Field's article and bibliography, "The Malory Life Records," in *A Companion to Malory*, ed. Elizabeth Archibald and A. S. G. Edwards (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), 115–30. Amid the many private feuds of the fifteenth century, a prison record like Malory's was not uncommon: J. R. Lander notes that "between 1448 and 1455 at least one-sixth of the peerage were, at some time or another, imprisoned for violent conduct" (*Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth Century England*, 3rd ed. (London: Hutchison, 1977), 66).

¹² There is much evidence that Malory saw his role as that of an historian. He uses the past tense more than his sources do, imitates the straightforward syntax of chronicle writing, and remarks on the impossibility of fully comprehending some past events. For Malory's syntax, see Field, *Romance and Chronicle: A Study of Malory's Prose Style* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 146; and Jill Mann, *The Narrative of Distance, the Distance of Narrative in Malory's Morte Darthur* (London: William Matthews Lectures, 1991), 31. On Malory's narrator as historian, see Field, *Romance and Chronicle*, esp. 37ff., where he famously argues that Malory "is putting romance material into chronicle form"; Mark Lambert, *Malory: Style and Vision in Le Morte Darthur* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 125–38; and Felicity Riddy, *Sir Thomas Malory* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987), 31–59. On Malory's portrayal of the alterity of the Arthurian world, see Robert S. Sturges, "Epistemology of the Bedchamber:

quest described by Nicholas Watson: a longing for fusion that recognizes the impossibility (and perhaps inadvisability) of such a union. Malory expresses this desire most vividly, I would argue, through the celebration of Maytime: a device that—interestingly enough—remains a centerpiece of modern reenactments of the late Middle Ages. At the Medieval Festivals and Renaissance Faires that take place across North America each summer, attendees attempt to revive medieval festivity by donning flower crowns purchased at concession stands and visiting entertainment venues such as the “Maybower Theater” and the “Maypole Common.”¹³ For Malory and his first readers, however, the celebration of Maytime was far more complex. In his depictions of May, I contend, Malory both enlists the reader in a nostalgic project and calls that project into question. He uses May motifs to deepen the reader’s pleasure in the Arthurian story, while, simultaneously, he exploits Maying’s dark and elegiac undertones to intensify the shadows in the Arthurian garden. Malory’s May scenes render literal Johan Huizinga’s observation that in the fifteenth century, “so intense and colorful was life that it could stand the mingling of the smell of blood and roses.”¹⁴

At its most basic, Maying involved an early morning trip to the countryside—usually in the first days of May—to gather or pay homage to flowers and leaves, followed by a return to town or court to display or celebrate that vegetation.¹⁵ In England, the flower of choice was the hawthorn, also called the whitethorn, the May tree, or simply “the may.” Maying could also involve the election and temporary reign of festive rulers, Kings and/or Queens of May with their own courts and followers. In late medieval England, and indeed

Textuality, Knowledge, and the Representation of Adultery in the Malory and the Prose Lancelot,” *Arthuriana* 7, no. 4 (1997): 47–49, 48–61.

¹³ See, for example, Gloria Goodale, “Renaissance Faires Make History Come Alive,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 June 1997, 10.

¹⁴ *Autumn of the Middle Ages*, 24.

¹⁵ For records of May customs in medieval England, see John Brand, *Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain* (1849; Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1969), 1:212–70; E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (1903; Mineola, NY: Dover, 1996), 1:160–81; Roscoe E. Parker, “Some Records of the Somyr Play,” in *Studies in Honor of John C. Hodges and Alwin Thaler*, ed. Richard Beale Davis and John Leon Lievsay (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1961), 19–26; Ronald Hutton, *The Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 226–76; and the various volumes of *Records of Early English Drama* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979–present).

throughout its history, the festival of Maying was notably paradoxical and ambiguous. On the one hand, May observances could be seen as a display of courtly refinement and restraint (particularly when they involved, as in courtly poetry, contemplating a single flower without plucking it), and they could mark a pious celebration of the 1 May festival of Saints Philip and James the Lesser. On the other hand, because of their popularity and atmosphere of festive license, Maytime celebrations sometimes became unruly and overflowed into prohibited spaces. Celebrants stole vegetation from neighboring estates; and social unrest could occur.¹⁶ During the London May Day festivities of 1517, remembered as “Evil May Day,” tensions between apprentices and aliens led to bloodshed.¹⁷ Further, Maying was continually linked to sexual improprieties.¹⁸ The literature of Maying mirrored these tensions: May flowers were celebrated as symbols of the beloved or dismissed as earthly vanities; Maying observances were admired as journeys to enlightenment or condemned as wanderings from the way.

Although other writers had translated segments of the French Arthurian cycle into English, Malory was the first to attempt a “hoole book” tracing the rise, efflorescence, and fall of the Round Table, and his was the first extended version of the Arthurian legend composed by a single author.¹⁹ In the course of this narrative, Malory

¹⁶ See the examples cited by Charles Phythian-Adams, “Ceremony and the Citizen: The Communal Year at Coventry 1450–1550,” in *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500–1700: Essays in Urban History*, ed. Peter Clark and Paul Slack (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 58.

¹⁷ Leah Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 2.

¹⁸ For example, one medieval preacher chastised “nyce maydens” who “walketh about in medes and in fayre places . . . as it were shewynge hem self to lese her maydenhode” (G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England: A Neglected Chapter in the History of English Letters and of the English People* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1961), 119). Similarly, Peter Idley’s fifteenth-century book of advice to his son warns against fetching home “fresshe maijs—/ That maketh maidens stomble and falle in the brenis” (*Peter Idley’s Instructions to His Son*, ed. C. D’Evelyn, *MLA Monograph* 6 (1935): 2.A.1032–33).

¹⁹ Dorsey Armstrong, “Gender and the Chivalric Community: Sir Thomas Malory’s *Arthurian*” (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1998), 18. The phrase “hoole book” appears in the final lines of the *Morte*, in a passage that survives only in Caxton’s printed version (the Winchester MS is missing the first and last quires). Eugène Vinaver, the first editor of the Winchester MS, argued that Malory had written eight autonomous romances, but other scholars have essentially dismantled this claim with

depicts a Maytime that, despite its celebrated weather, is not a halcyon season for the Arthurian court. Early in the *Morte*, in a scene also found in Malory's sources, Arthur orchestrates a Herod-like murder of May-born infants—an attempt to rid his kingdom of the treacherous Mordred, born on May Day. But only in Malory does this action foreshadow further dark meditations on May festivity.

In the last tales of the *Morte*, Malory includes two original May descriptions: the first a passage that scholars refer to as the “May encomium,” which contemplates “vertuose love”; the second a brief meditation on May imagery that prefaces the account of Arthur's downfall. Between these descriptive passages, the narrator recounts a Maying expedition organized by Guenevere, an episode also absent from Malory's sources. Far from serving as mere rhetorical embellishments, these three interconnected May passages contain some of Malory's most memorable prose and have generated much critical discussion. Idyllic yet haunting, containing dark twists, the passages interweave descriptions of the joyful May season with intimations of the court's bloody destruction. It is no coincidence, I will argue, that Maytime becomes significant in Malory's *Morte Darthur*, a work that simultaneously exalts a mythic British past and mourns its limitations and inevitable decline.²⁰

“Whyche ought moost to be remembred”: *The Nostalgia of the Morte*

In the preface to his 1485 edition of the *Morte*, William Caxton provides one interpretive framework for the work: that of commemo-

stronger arguments for unity. The debate originated in *Essays on Malory*, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963); the subsequent *Malory's Originality: A Critical Study of Le Morte Darthur*, ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964) promotes the unity theory. For a summary of this controversy, see Helen Cooper, ed., *Le Morte Darthur* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), xxi–xxii. Yet, as Robert S. Sturges has noted, most scholarly treatments of the *Morte* attempt a compromise: while maintaining the work's overall unity, most studies focus (as will this article) on just one or two tales (*Medieval Interpretation: Models of Reading in Literary Narrative, 1100–1500* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), 195).

²⁰ For versions of this interpretation of the *Morte* as both promoting and critiquing the Arthurian world, see Elizabeth Pochoda, *Arthurian Propaganda: Le Morte Darthur as an Historical Ideal of Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971), 102–9; and Lambert, 125–38.

ration and remembrance. He attributes the book's publication to the demand of English gentlemen for:

the noble hystorye . . . of the moost renommed Crysten kyng . . . and worthy, Kyng Arthur, whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge us Englysshemen tofore al other Crysten kynges. (xiii)²¹

Caxton's story of "noble and dyvers gentylmen," whether true or constructed, establishes his model readership and guarantees the book's status with other readers, such as merchants, who might want to emulate "gentylmen."²² Later in the same preface, Caxton specifies how his various readers should "remembre" King Arthur and his knights:

And I, accordyng to my cople, have doon sette it in enprynte to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chyvalry, the jentyll and vertuous dedes that some knyghtes used in tho dayes . . . humbly bysechyng al noble lordes and ladyes wyth al other estates, of what estate or degree they been of, that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werde, that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce, and to folowe the same. (xv)

Caxton's comments reveal something of the *Morte's* cultural function for its earliest readers. To a population first identified as "noble lordes and ladyes" but later broadened to include "al other estates," Caxton recommends the *Morte Darthur* as part of a program of memorization and reenactment, remembering chivalry in mind and body. Caxton's promotion of the *Morte* relates to his interest in and translation of chivalric manuals such as those by Christine de Pizan and Ramon Lull: he presents Malory's narrative as rich in similar models of behavior to be followed.²³ In fact, in the epilogue to his translation of Ramon Lull's *Order of Chivalry*, printed in 1384, Caxton

²¹ All quotations from the *Morte Darthur* are from Vinaver's one-volume edition, *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, ed. Eugène Vinaver, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

²² On Caxton's frequent attributions of books to the urging of anonymous "friends" or "gentlemen," see Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, "Richard III's Books: XI Ramon Lull's *Order of Chivalry* Translated by William Caxton," *The Ricardian* 9 (1991): 114–15.

²³ For more on the connection of the *Morte Darthur* to chivalric manuals and compilations of the time see Karen Cherewatuk, "Sir Thomas Malory's 'Grete Booke,'" in *The Social and Literary Contexts of Malory's Morte Darthur*, ed. D. Thomas Hanks, Jr., and Jessica Gentry Brogdon (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000), 42–67; and

appends his own reading assignment to Lull's advice for aspiring knights: "... rede the noble volumes of Saynt Graal, of Lancelot, of Galaad, of Trystam, of Perse Forest, of Percyval, of Gawayn and many mo. Ther shalle ye see manhode, curtosye and gentylnesse."²⁴ Perhaps evidence that Caxton already anticipated publishing the *Morte*, these lines show that Caxton clearly considered chivalric manuals like Lull's and Arthurian romances to be complementary.

Furthermore, his prologue to the *Morte* establishes that Caxton considered the work a "noble hystorye." Another of Caxton's prologues, to his 1482 edition of the *Polycronicon*, reveals a fifteenth-century view of history connected to Nicholas Watson's description of affective knowledge: "For certayne [history] . . . is a greet beneurte [benefit] unto a man that can be reformed by other and strange mennes hurtes and scathes/and by the same to knowe/what is requysyte and prouffitable for hys lyf."²⁵ In this theory of history, the distance implied by the adjectives "other and strange" is bridged by the empathetic impact of "hurtes and scathes": the pain of the distant other somehow reshapes the reader and is translated into self-knowledge. I would argue that this notion of an empathetic bridge, built on shared pain, is a useful way of looking at the final sections of the *Morte Darthur*. For a bridge is exactly what Malory creates in the paradoxical May passages: a flower-lined bridge that immerses the fifteenth-century reader in May Day experiences both "other"

Jennifer Goodman, "Malory and Caxton's Chivalric Series, 1481–85," in *Studies in Malory*, ed. James W. Spisak (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1985), 257–74. The claim that Malory's *Morte* and some of Caxton's other printing projects were nostalgic, inspired by a mixture of escapism and attempted social reformation, has a long history. For early examples of this argument, see E. K. Chambers, *English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 185, 195–97; and H. S. Bennett, *Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 200. Arthur Ferguson argues that both Malory and Caxton wanted to "awaken a once-proud England to an awareness of its rightful place of honor by restating the principles and precedents of the chivalric tradition" (*Indian Summer*, 13; see also 34–58). Pochoda contends that the *Morte* "is made to function quite obviously as a *moral* for its author's age" (125); in her view, Malory's portrayal of the disintegrating Arthurian ideal warns his contemporaries not to rely on the revival of a flawed political system.

²⁴ *Selections from William Caxton*, ed. N. F. Blake (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 111.

²⁵ *Selections from William Caxton*, 1. For this passage and its importance to Caxton's concept of history, I am indebted to the insightful analysis of Louise O. Fradenburg and Carla Freccero, "The Pleasures of History," *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies* 1 (1995): 371–84.

and familiar, mingling the pleasures of springtime with the pain of loss.

The May Encomium and the Poetics of Absence

By the middle of Tale Seven in the *Morte Darthur*, the chivalric society of the earlier tales has begun to unravel. While three knights achieve the Grail in Tale Six, Lancelot falls short, hindered by his devotion to earthly things, namely his attachment to Guenevere. In Tale Seven, the scattered “remnants” of the chivalric fellowship reconvene but never manage to regain their former glory. At this point, Malory finally focuses on a topic he has been avoiding for much of the narrative: the relationship between Lancelot and Guenevere. Despite the revelations of the Grail quest, they have renewed their romance, loving one another “more hotter than they dud toforehonde” and enjoying “many such prevy draughtis [private walks] togydir” (611).²⁶ These private walks have caused Agravain and his cohorts to spread gossip about the couple, and Lancelot has already rescued the Queen from one near-fatal misunderstanding. At this crucial point in the storyline, the beginning of the end of the Arthurian world, Malory places his first descriptive May passage and Guenevere’s tragic Maying expedition.

In the passage scholars commonly refer to as the “May encomium,” Malory constructs an analogy between mild springtime weather and “vertuose love” and contrasts the fickle love of his contemporaries with the loyal love of Arthur’s day. Apparently original to Malory, this passage jars readerly expectations. The May encomium offers a philosophical argument in a fast-paced, action-centered story, a lush landscape description in a work prone to hasty sketches.²⁷ Because of its uniqueness, the passage has received a great deal of critical attention as a potential window into Malory’s relationship with his

²⁶ See “draught,” *MED* 3a, *OED* 20. Beverly Kennedy convincingly argues for this interpretation of “prevy draughtis,” against the alternate interpretation of engaging in tricks and deceptions (“Adultery in Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*,” *Arthuriana* 7, no. 4 (1997): 76 and 88 n. 22).

²⁷ Lambert observes that the May encomium is striking because “Malory so rarely pays attention to season or flora” (148). For more on Malory’s narrative style, see Field, *Romance and Chronicle*; and Mann, *The Narrative of Distance*.

material. Critics have lauded it as “the most important of Malory’s comments on the story” and “[Malory’s] most famous original comment.”²⁸

Scholars usually focus on the section of the encomium that contrasts fifteenth-century and Arthurian love:

But nowadayes men can nat love sevennyght but they musste have all their desyres. That love may nat endure by reson, for where they bethe sone accorded and hasty, heete sone keelyth. And ryght so faryth the love nowadayes, sone hote sone colde. Thys ys no stabyltyé. But the olde love was nat so. For men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustis was betwyxte them, and than was love trouthe and faythefulnes. And so in lyke wyse was used such love in kynge Arthurs dayes. (649)

Here Malory’s narrator contrasts the emotional temperature fluctuations of the present with a more stable and temperate past. Paradoxically, this analysis occurs immediately before the Knight of the Cart episode, which includes a hasty adulterous encounter between Guenevere and Lancelot, the clearest sign of their culpability in the destruction that will follow. The behavior of the *Morte*’s principal characters thus seems to contradict the narrator’s claim about the stability of love in the Arthurian world. The adulterous episode calls into question the meaning of “trouthe and faythefulness”: faithful to one another, Lancelot and Guenevere are faithless to King Arthur. Because of this apparent discrepancy, critical assessments of the May encomium have varied widely, from reading the passage as an ironic condemnation of the lovers to seeing it as an endorsement of their loyalty in the face of adversity.²⁹

²⁸ P. E. Tucker, “Chivalry in the *Morte*,” in *Essays on Malory*, 81; Muriel Whitaker, *Arthur’s Kingdom of Adventure: The World of Malory’s Morte Darthur* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1984), 112.

²⁹ For the former view, see R. M. Lumiansky, “‘The Tale of Lancelot and Guenevere’: Suspense,” in *Malory’s Originality*, 226; Raachel Jurovics, “The Definition of Virtuous Love in Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur*,” *Comitatus* 2 (1971): 40; and Irene Joynt, “Vengeance and Love in ‘The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere,’” *Arthurian Literature* 3 (1984): 91–112. The latter view is represented by R. T. Davies, “Malory’s ‘Vertuose Love,’” *Studies in Philology* 53 (1956): 459–69; Tucker, 64–103; D. S. Brewer, *The Morte Darthur: Parts Seven and Eight* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 24; and Terence McCarthy, *Reading the Morte Darthur* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), 68–70. Some scholars argue that the May encomium simultaneously praises and condemns Lancelot and Guenevere. For Charles Moorman, the May passage represents “a struggle between the adulterous courtly love of the last days of court and the fresh, chivalric love of its youth” (*The*

Yet the passage's murky logic ultimately undercuts such attempts at analysis.³⁰ The argument of the May encomium rests on a series of poetic oppositions: old versus new, summer versus winter, stable versus mutable, remembered versus forgotten. But in Malory's passage these oppositions shift and contradict each other: finally, Malory's narrator seems to endorse a love that is constant and unchanging yet paradoxically must be renewed each spring. Through all its faltering, however, the encomium poignantly communicates a bitter-sweet nostalgia: it uses May imagery to meditate on death, desire, and commemoration just as the Arthurian world begins to slip away.³¹

As the May encomium opens, Malory's narrator likens the flourishing of human desires to the flourishing of vegetation, both nourished by Maytime's vitality:

... the moneth of May was com, whan every lusty harte begynnyth to blossom and to burgeyne. For, lyke as trees and erbyis burgeynyth and florysshlyth in May, in lyke wyse every lusty harte that ys ony maner of lover spryngith, burgeynyth, buddyth, and florysshlyth in lusty dedis. (648)

As the passage continues, the narrator specifies the "lusty dedis" that May inspires:

For it gyvyth unto all lovers corrayge, that lusty moneth of May, in somthyng to constrayne hym to som maner of thyng more in that

Book of King Arthur: The Unity of Malory's Morte Darthur (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), 16). Peter Waldron argues that Malory regrets Lancelot and Guenevere's lack of Godly love but commends them for their human constancy ("Vertouse Love' and Adulterous Lovers: Coming to Terms with Malory," in *Sir Thomas Malory: Views and Re-views*, ed. D. Thomas Hanks, Jr. (New York: AMS, 1992), 54–62).

³⁰ For analyses of the passage's unclear logic, see Davies, 459; Field, *Romance and Chronicle*, 153; Lambert, 207–8; Joynt, 105; Richard Barber, "Chivalry and the Morte Darthur," in *A Companion to Malory*, 33. Riddy offers a particularly insightful account of the passage's pitfalls, observing that it makes many "assertions which are then qualified or denied" (142). Lambert similarly argues against overly analytical approaches to the passage: "Malory conveys the tone of earnestness that goes with true love far more than he does its doctrine" (146 n. 28). Few scholars, however, have credited R. S. Loomis's exasperated remark that Malory must have been drunk when he wrote the encomium. Specifically, Loomis accuses Malory of "imbibing freely of a certain product of Bordeaux." See *The Development of Arthurian Romance* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1963), 175.

³¹ My interpretation of the May encomium is partly indebted to Riddy's astute observation that the encomium communicates both a "longing [to transcend fragmentation of the self and the world] and the impossibility of achieving it" (142).

moneth than in any other monethe, for dyverce causys: for than all erbys and treys renewyth a man and woman, and in lyke wyse lovers callyth to their mynde olde jantylnes and olde servyse, and many kynde dedes that was forgotyn by neclygence. (648–9)

Surprisingly, instead of enjoying activities typical of contemporary Maying festivities—garland-making, wandering through meadows, romantic dalliance—here Malory’s lovers are engaged primarily in revisiting the past. Blooming herbs and budding trees spark a discipline of remembrance, and the collection of flowers so central to Maying is superseded by the recollection of “olde jantylnes” and “olde servyse.” Interestingly, this nostalgia mirrors the nostalgia of Caxton’s prologue for the “jentyll and vertuous dedes” and the “good and honest actes” of Arthur and his knights.

Mark Lambert has observed of the encomium that “in this nostalgic world, love itself is a form of nostalgia.”³² Indeed, in the *Morte*, the love of Guenevere and Lancelot is always already nostalgic. By the time Malory’s narrator turns to the depiction of their romance, it is already threatened, already looking longingly back to a golden time. The nostalgia Caxton attributes to the *Morte*’s reader is also a form of love: the reader’s commemoration of the “good and honest actes” of the *Morte*’s “flowers of knighthood” replicates the lovers’ discipline of remembrance in the springtime landscape of the encomium. The *Morte Darthur* thus serves as a vehicle for the reader’s nostalgia, just as the spring landscape inspires the lovers.

Malory’s association of a flowering landscape with remembrance gains strength, I would argue, from a trope of medieval mnemonics. Mary Carruthers has noted the medieval use of “metaphors that liken books and memory to fields and meadows . . . full of flowers.”³³ In this schema, readers, like honeybees, move from flower to flower in a meadow of quotations, distilling the essences into their own unique honey or memory. Further, Carruthers argues that illuminations of flowering plants in the margins of manuscripts could function as symbols of memory and as actual memory cues.³⁴ Add this

³² Lambert, 147.

³³ *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 38.

³⁴ *Book of Memory*, 246, 248. See also Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 162.

to the literary tradition of flowers symbolizing the beloved, most famously in the *Roman de la rose* and French marguerite poetry, and it is not surprising that Malory would represent Maying as a walk down “memory lane.”

Throughout the encomium, seasonal oppositions mark off the distance between the wintry world of Malory’s readers and the “grene summer” of the *Morte*, but Malory also moves to bridge that alterity. In the final lines of the passage, Malory’s narrator conscripts his readers into a project of commemoration:

And therefore all ye that be lovers, calle unto youre remembraunce the monethe of May lyke as ded quene Gwenyver, for whom I make here a lytyll mencion, that whyle she lyved she was a trew lover, and therefor she had a good ende. (649)

This request to “all ye that be lovers” (significantly, one of the few direct addresses to the reader in the *Morte*) deepens the association of Maying and remembrance. The narrator urges the reader to emulate those Maytime lovers who recollect the kindnesses and past deeds of the beloved. The phrase “calle unto youre remembraunce” echoes the phrase “calle to mind,” the encomium’s earlier description of the lovers’ springtime mnemonics. Further, because an account of a Maying expedition led by Guenevere immediately follows the encomium, Malory’s narrator implies that the reader should imitate Guenevere’s specific May observances. At the same time, the narrator’s reference to Guenevere’s “good ende” and the initial syntactical ambiguity of the phrase “lyke as ded quene Gwenyver”³⁵ add an elegiac note to the passage. Malory unveils a dead woman at the heart of his springtime meditation, and the reader’s dual assignment is both to emulate and to commemorate her.

By placing a reference to the dead and “trew” Guenevere within a floral frame, Malory draws on a device commonly used in medieval poetry to communicate bittersweet yearnings for an absent or distant woman. With roots in the almost inaccessible flower of the

³⁵ The syntactically correct reading, “as Queen Guenevere did,” is challenged initially by an alternate reading, “like dead Queen Guenevere.” This phrase illustrates what D. Thomas Hanks, Jr., dubs a “cycle-back” phenomenon in Malory’s prose; some of Malory’s phrases retain alternate meanings until the reader reaches the end of the clause and sorts out the syntax (“‘Wynter Rasure’ and the Text of Malory’s *Morte Darthur*” (Paper delivered at the 35th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, 5 May 2000)).

Roman de la Rose and the walled *hortus conclusus* of the Song of Songs, the elegiac resonances of flowers and gardens appear in Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* and in the opening of *Pearl*, among other works.³⁶ However, for the specific combination of a floral motif and a reference to the absent Guenevere, Malory may have drawn upon an episode in one of his sources, the thirteenth-century prose *Lancelot*.³⁷ Imprisoned in a tower by Morgan, Lancelot remembers Guenevere through the spring landscape:

After Easter, at the beginning of May, when Lancelot saw the trees full of leaves and flowers and the foliage that made his heart rejoice and the rose that bloomed each day fresh and red, he remembered his lady the queen and her bright complexion of which the rose reminded him every day—for when he looked at the rose it seemed it was the color of his lady, and he did not know which was the brighter hue, the rose or his lady, and that was the thing most responsible for his torments.³⁸

As in the May encomium, blossoming vegetation initially inspires rejoicing and remembering. But the sight of the rose also causes Lancelot suffering. The rose is not the Queen, and the more Lancelot uses it to remember the Queen, the more its similarity interferes with an accurate recollection of Guenevere's appearance. Lancelot's "torments" thus involve the pain of trying to resurrect an absent beloved through substitutions and approximations, through memories and metaphors. Lancelot will ultimately break the window bars with his bare hands, "[tearing] the flesh from his fingers, so that the blood spurted to the ground," in his frenzy to possess the rose: a scene that foreshadows his reunion with Guenevere in the "Knight of the Cart" episode.³⁹

³⁶ Useful discussions of the motif of the flower in the Middle Ages include Peter Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965–66), 1:181–92; Jack Goody, *The Culture of Flowers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 120–65; and Susan Crane, "Maytime in Late Medieval Courts," *New Medieval Literatures* 2 (1998): 159–79.

³⁷ A translation of the prose *Lancelot* can be found in *Lancelot-Grail: The Old French Arthurian Vulgate and Post-Vulgate in Translation*, ed. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland, 1995), vols. 2 and 3. Margaret Louise Morse also posits a connection between the May encomium and this May passage, though her focus is different from mine. See "Love's Governance versus the King's: The Transformation of the Cart Episode" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1985), 159–62.

³⁸ *Lancelot-Grail*, 3:224–25.

³⁹ *Lancelot-Grail*, 3:225.

Malory thus promotes two interrelated types of remembering in the May encomium: remembering through vegetation, a kind of floral mnemonics; and remembering through imitation, specifically through the imitation of a Maying ritual. By asking the reader to “calle unto youre remembraunce the monethe of May lyke as ded quene Gwenyver,” Malory implies that a seasonal ceremony can serve as a bridge to a distant mythic past. Malory urges the reader to perform Guenevere and to mourn her through Maying observances, to emulate and commemorate the Queen and her lost world through a celebration of May weather. While many readers have noted Malory’s keen interest in ceremony and courtly formalities, an interest shared by his contemporaries,⁴⁰ little attention has been paid to the one ceremony he directly urges his reader to imitate: Guenevere’s disastrous Maying expedition.

Guenevere’s Maying: The Limitations of Ceremony

In the scene following the encomium, Guenevere enlists a group of knights for a Maying observance:

So hit befelle in the moneth of May, quene Gwenyver called unto her ten knyghtes of the Table Rounde, and she gaff them warnynge that early uppon the morn she wolde ryde on-may(y)ng into woodis and fylidis besydes Westemynster:

“And I warne you that there be none of you but he be well horsed, and that ye all be clothed all in gryne, othir in sylke othir in clothe. And I shall brynge with me ten ladyes, and every knyght shall have a lady be hym.” (649)

The knights “made hem redy in the freysshyst maner,” and on the appointed morning, the party “rode on-mayinge in wodis and medowis as hit pleased hem, in grete joy and delytes” (650). Malory implies that the expedition engages in typical medieval Maying practices,

⁴⁰ Pochoda notes that the *Morte* participates in fifteenth-century society’s “desperate concern for the permanence of human institutions in a time of crisis” (104). See also Ann Elaine Bliss, “Ceremony in Malory’s ‘Morte Darthur’: Fifteenth-Century Influences” (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1993), and “The Symbolic Importance of Processions in Malory’s *Morte Darthur* and in Fifteenth-Century England,” in *The Social and Literary Contexts of Malory’s Morte Darthur*, 75–93.

such as gathering flowers and leafy boughs and making garlands, for soon the knights are “bedaysshed wyth erbis, mossis and floures in the freysshyste maner” (650). Unfortunately, the greenery-covered knights are also vulnerable, far from court and only lightly armed, and the party is attacked by Meliagaunt, a knight who in Malory’s version has long lusted after the queen. He severely wounds the Maying knights and carries them and Guenevere to his castle. At this point, the episode follows a condensed version of the prose *Lancelot*: Lancelot, arriving in a cart, rescues the Queen. As he does in Malory’s source, Lancelot breaks through the Queen’s window, bleeds on her sheets during their tryst, and defends her from subsequent charges of adultery.

In this account of a May festival gone terribly wrong, Malory calls into question the nostalgia of the May encomium. While the May encomium memorializes and frames a virtuous Guenevere in flowers, her Maying expedition contains undertones of deception and social fragmentation and ends with the shocking spectacle of bloody flowers. After the garlands of the Maying knights have been splattered with blood, the reader may understandably doubt the advisability of remembering May as Queen Guenevere did. Gather ye rosebuds, Malory seems to say, at your peril. Meleagaunt’s attack shatters the May ceremony, interrupts the collection of flowers (and the implied recollection of past kindnesses), and violates the process of remembrance celebrated by the May encomium. Malory’s account of Guenevere’s Maying, appearing right after he has enjoined the reader to remember May as Guenevere did, throws into doubt the possibility of a painless recovery of the past.

Aside from its bloody end, the Maying expedition is problematic from its inception, tainted with dishonesty and tense with repressed conflict. Guenevere’s Maying is just one of several attempts made by Lancelot and Guenevere in Tale Seven to manipulate ceremony to their own ends, to orchestrate public spectacles that will disguise their private affair and reunify the fractured court.⁴¹ Guenevere’s Maying transforms her and Lancelot’s scandalous private walks (“privy draughtes”) into a public promenade from which Lancelot is con-

⁴¹ Lumiansky notes Guenevere’s probable motivation for organizing the Maying (227). Sturges observes that in the first half of Tale Seven Lancelot and Guenevere use false signs to attempt to conceal their love and ultimately fall victim to their own abuse of signification (*Medieval Interpretation*, 196–98).

spicuously absent. Further, the dress code for the expedition—green for everyone, even for the troublesome Agravain—masks private feuds with the appearance of unity. Yet, ultimately, the Maying festival is most reminiscent of the disastrous dinner Guenevere hosts earlier in Tale Seven, “to shew outwardly that she had as grete joy in all other knyghtes of the Rounde Table as she had in sir Launcelot” (613), a dinner that ends with a murder and the discovery of a poisoned apple among the desserts. Like this fateful dinner, Guenevere’s Maying shows that attempting to revive *communitas* through ceremony can backfire. Malory’s description of the May expedition contains hints of the dissension and conflict that will finally destroy the Arthurian fellowship.⁴²

Yet Guenevere’s catastrophic Maying continues and indeed strengthens the notes of mourning and remembrance sounded at the end of the May encomium. Death darkens the episode before it begins: as we have seen, the closing line of the May encomium refers to the Queen’s “good ende.” Further, the mythical antecedents of Malory’s Guenevere tie her to Proserpina and that goddess’s seasonal cycle of death and rebirth. Celtic analogues recounted the abduction of Guenevere by an Otherworld figure, sometimes an Otherworld spouse, and the prose *Lancelot* maintained Meleagant’s identity as ruler of a magical kingdom.⁴³ While I am not arguing that Malory directly evokes Guenevere’s literary past, his account of a Maytime abduction does strengthen her connection to Proserpina.⁴⁴ Like Proserpina, Malory’s Guenevere is spied upon and attacked while gathering flowers. Introduced as it is by the May encomium with its injunction

⁴² Many of the events in the seventh tale exhibit this disparity between surface harmony and internal conflict, between rosy appearances and darker realities. See Elizabeth Edwards, “The Place of Women in the *Morte Darthur*,” in *A Companion to Malory*, 51–54.

⁴³ Interestingly, Malory chooses not to adopt this detail from his source but makes Meliagaunt an insider, a knight of the Round Table. On the topic of Guenevere’s abductions, Gaston Paris remarked that “the trait of being run away with is certainly Guinevere’s oldest and most persistent one,” quoted in Kenneth G. T. Webster, *Guinevere: A Study of her Abductions* (Milton, MA: Turtle Press, 1951), 12. For antecedents of the abduction motif in the Arthurian tradition, as well as in Celtic and Welsh literature and mythology, see T. P. Cross and W. A. Nitze, *Lancelot and Guenevere: A Study on the Origins of Courtly Love* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1930), 20–62. Cross and Nitze also note similarities between abductions of Guenevere and the abduction of Herodis in *Sir Oyeo* (30–31).

⁴⁴ Webster touches upon similarities between Malory’s account and the story of Proserpina (107).

to remember, Guenevere's abduction touches upon themes of loss and recovery similar to those explored by the Proserpina myth. The implied burial and resurrection of a May queen adds another dimension to the *Morte's* attempted revival of the past.

In the encomium, I have argued, Malory forges an empathetic connection between Queen Guenevere and the reader built on acts of remembering and commemorating and on the pleasures and practices of Maying. In his account of Guenevere's Maying, Malory again offers the vicarious pleasures of field-wandering and flower-gathering but then shocks the reader by strewing the festival space with bloody flowers. This striking scene may itself operate mnemonically: as Jody Enders has recently observed about medieval drama, shocking and violent spectacles facilitate collective memory, a phenomenon Enders calls (quoting the performance theorist Herbert Blau) "blooded thought."⁴⁵ In the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, a rhetorical handbook commonly used in medieval and Renaissance schoolrooms, Pseudo-Cicero argues that images created for a schema of artificial memory are easier to remember if "we somehow disfigure them, as by introducing one stained with blood or soiled with mud or smeared with red paint, so that its form is more striking."⁴⁶ Malory's wounded knights, their floral garments slashed and bloodied, could provide the reader with a vivid way to "remember May," albeit a darker May than the idyllic season of the encomium.

Bloody Flowers: "Remembir of this World Unstable"

Malory's Maytime becomes even darker in the opening passage of Tale Eight, which recalls the green May encomium before descending into despair:

In May, whan every harte floryshyth and burgenyth (for, as the season ys lusty to beholde and comfortable, so man and woman rejoysyth and gladith of somer commynge with his freyshe floures, for wynter wyth hys rowghe wyndis and blastis causyth lusty men and women to

⁴⁵ Jody Enders, "Emotion Memory and the Medieval Performance of Violence," *Theatre Survey* 38, no. 1 (1997): 142.

⁴⁶ [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium*, ed. and trans. Harry Caplan, Loeb Classical Library (1954; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), 3:37, quoted in Enders, 144.

cowre and to syt by fyres), so thys season hit befelle in the moneth of May a grete angur and unhapp(e) that stynted nat tylle the floure of chyvalry of [alle] the worlde was destroyed and slayne. (673)

Again, as in the May encomium, Malory emphasizes the renewed energy and “courage” of springtime (here contrasted with the lethargy and fear caused by winter). Yet in this passage, as in Guenevere’s Maying, the initial rejoicing is rendered ironic, heralding a destruction better suited to the “wyndis and blastis” of winter. Here Malory intensifies his May imagery by representing the whole of the Round Table fellowship as a “transitory flower,” its flourishing and burgeoning cut short, the blossom of chivalry mown down without clear hope of renewal. This imagery reappears after the devastation at Salisbury Plain, when Guenevere, once a May queen, takes the veil and laments to Lancelot: “thorow the and me ys the f[lou]re of kyn-gis and [knyghtes] destroyed” (720).

As I noted earlier, the festival of Maying in fifteenth-century England was inherently ambivalent, rich with contradictory associations. Maying could still imply unruliness and sexual licentiousness—the giving of “green gowns”—but by the fifteenth century the celebration was also tamed and legitimized as a church fundraiser. Youthful energies unleashed by the warm weather clashed with another May Day theme, that of the transitory flower. The flower of Maying often served as a *memento mori*. The liturgy for 1 May, the feast day of Saints Philip and James the Lesser, draws a connection between the withering “flower of the grass” and the looming grave:

But let the brother of low condition glory in his exaltation: And the rich, in his being low; because as the flower of the grass shall he pass away. For the sun rose with a burning heat and parched the grass, and the flower thereof fell off, and the beauty of the shape thereof perished: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. (James 1:9–11)⁴⁷

This verse complemented and perhaps darkened the festive flower-gathering of that day. By the Renaissance, there is evidence that popular May songs featured the comparison of human life to a fading

⁴⁷ Douai-Rheims translation. Marcus also notes this passage from the May Day liturgy (151).

flower.⁴⁸ In addition to its prominence in the May Day liturgy and songs, the transitory flower motif was associated with spring festivity in Ovid's account of the Floralia, where Flora warns her followers to "use life's flower while it still blooms."⁴⁹ An English monastic chronicler, recounting the 1306 coronation of Robert the Bruce, King of Scots, specifically connected spring festivity and the fragile flower to earthly rule. According to the chronicler, Bruce observed to his wife, "Yesterday you and I were called followers; today I am truly called king and you queen," and his wife replied, "I reckon that you are like a summer king; perhaps you will not be a winter king . . . just like the flower of the field which exists today and tomorrow will be returned to the earth."⁵⁰ Malory, I would argue, alludes to a similar mixture of motifs in his May passages, which start with love's rosy optimism and end with the vanished flower of the Arthurian world.

In addition to being linked to May Day festivity, the transitory flower motif was extremely popular in the devotional literature of Malory's time, literature obsessed with life's ephemerality.⁵¹ Parallels can be drawn between Malory's use of May imagery and John Lydgate's exploration of life's transience in his poems about mortality, particularly in "That Now is Hay Some-tyme was Grase" and

⁴⁸ Shakespeare may have been referring to a May song of this sort in *As You Like It* 5.3.25–28:

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that a life was but a flower,
In the spring time, [the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.
Sweet lovers love the spring.]

⁴⁹ "Et monet eatatis specie, dum floreat, uti" (*Fasti*, ed. and trans. James George Frazer (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), 5.353). Significantly, medieval and early modern observers believed that May festivals derived from the Floralia. For example, Polydore Vergil claimed that the May custom of decorating houses and gates with flowers was "derived of the Romaynes, that use the same to honour their goddesse Flora with such ceremonies" (*The Works of the Famous Antiquary, Polidore Virgil*, trans. John Langley (London: Simon Miller, 1663), 194). See Marcus, 289 n. 19, for a list of other references.

⁵⁰ "Heri vocabamur ego comes et tu comitissa; hodie vero ego rex et tu regina [vocamur]." Cui illa 'Aestimo quod rex aestivalis sis; forsitan hyemalis non eris . . . tanquam flos agri qui hodie est et cras in clibanum mittitur' (*Flores Historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series (London: 1890), 3:130). See also Sandra Billington, *Mock Kings in Medieval Society and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 12.

⁵¹ See Riddy, 25–29, 142–43.

"As a Mydsomer Rose."⁵² According to John Shirley's manuscript rubric, "That Now is Hay" was commissioned by Queen Katherine during a summer observance, "as in here sportes she walkyd by the medowes that were late mowen in the monthe of Iulij."⁵³ Lydgate uses the summer setting to meditate on the "transmutacion" of the world:

Take hede now in this grene mede
 In Apryll howe these floures sprynge,
 And on theyr stalke splaye and sprede
 In lustye May in eche mornynge;
 But whan Iuyn cometh, the ben droppynge,
 And sharpe sythes lygge them full base,
 Therefore I seye, in my wrytynge,
 That nowe is heye som tyme was grasse. (9–16)

The passage that opens Malory's Tale Eight shares with Lydgate's poem the imagery of destroyed flowers. Unlike Lydgate, however, Malory places the violent destruction where it is least expected, at the height of May's festive season.

Lydgate's "As a Mydsomer Rose" similarly contemplates life's transience but ends with a celebration of martyred crusaders. Lydgate argues that their suffering is no ephemeral "somyr roose" but akin to the suffering of Christ, "the Roose of the bloody feeld." In this poem, as J. Norton-Smith has observed, Lydgate "translates the natural rose, symbol of organic decay . . . into a meditational emblem."⁵⁴ In contrast to the "bloody feld" at the end of Lydgate's poem, the bloody landscapes at the end of Guenevere's Maying and the opening of Tale Eight contain not floral "meditational emblems" but their wreckage. In Malory's *Morte* the flowers serve not as permanent symbols of Christ but as fleeting objects of nostalgia.

Yet, like Lydgate, Malory weds the flower of contemplation and the fragile flower. This two-sided flower, a bloom to be both adored and dismissed as earthly vanity, reflects the "late-medieval dividedness about the validity of the things of this world" that Felicity Riddy observes throughout Malory's final two tales.⁵⁵ Medieval moralists

⁵² *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed. Henry Noble MacCracken, EETS, OS 192 (1934; London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 2:780–85 and 809–13.

⁵³ J. Norton-Smith posited a connection between Malory's May encomium and "Than Now is Hay Some-tyme was Grasse" (Riddy, 142 n. 4).

⁵⁴ *John Lydgate: Poems*, ed. J. Norton-Smith (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966), 138.

⁵⁵ Riddy, 143.

often linked flower-gathering to a sinful involvement with earthly delights. Some medieval allegorizations of Proserpina condemn her as guilty of worldly desire, signified by her delight in flowers.⁵⁶ Similarly, in his allegorization of Ovid's account of Orpheus, Pierre Bersuire attributes Eurydice's abduction to her collection of flowers:

... let us say that Orpheus is a sinner who, by the bite of the serpent, that is, by the temptation of the devil, lost his wife, that is, his soul, when she was indiscreetly gathering flowers, that is, applying her mind to the flux of temporalia.⁵⁷

In the *Morte*, Malory's representations of Maying and flowers combine desire for the unattainable beloved with condemnations of earthly vanity. Romances such as Malory's chief sources were usually bound with moral and devotional texts rather than with other courtly material⁵⁸; therefore, it is not surprising that Malory, part of this manuscript culture, fused the desirable rose of romance (from the *Lancelot*) and the transitory flower of the moralists.

In enjoining his readers to remember May, Malory thus may have been echoing Galahad's injunction to Lancelot to contemplate the world's mutability. At the end of the Grail quest, Galahad asks Bors to warn Lancelot about his over-attachment to earthly things: "My fayre lorde, salew me unto my lorde sir Launcelot, my fadir, and as sone as ye se hym bydde hym remembir of this world unstable" (607). The *Morte's* bloody flowers ultimately prove one of the most powerful mementos of "this world unstable."

Maying as a Quest for the Past

Malory's May encomium, his account of Guenevere's disastrous Maying, and the opening to Tale Eight all relay conflicting messages about the regulation and ultimate fate of the energies of spring. In courtly literature, Maying often celebrates youth, beauty, and the privileged pursuit of desire in a protected, temperate space. However,

⁵⁶ Herbert Anton, *Der Raub der Proserpina* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1967), 15–23.

⁵⁷ Quoted and translated in John Block Friedman, *Orpheus in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 128.

⁵⁸ Riddy, 14–17.

Maying's darker side mourns life's transience and evokes love's fickleness, the grave, and even the Underworld. The imagery of Maying thus provides an ideal vehicle, I would argue, for the tensions Malory explores in the *Morte Darthur*: tensions between earthly and spiritual quests, between burying and reenacting the past, between remembering and forgetting. Malory's emphasis on May increases the tortured nostalgia of his account of the downfall of the Arthurian world at the same time as it intensifies the reader's investment in this world. Drawing on the mnemonic and empathetic power of May imagery and Maytime celebrations, the passages tap directly into the reader's desires and fears. Remembering May as Guenevere did ultimately comes to stand for Malory's project of historical revival itself, for the nostalgic and vexed encounter with "flowers of knighthood" that is the *Morte Darthur*.

Finally, it is worth noting that the month of May is still a familiar feature of Arthuriana. From the end of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, where Guinevere nostalgically remembers a day when "all the court, / Green-suited, but with plumes that mock'd the may, / Had been—their wont—a-maying," to the May songs of T. H. White's *The Once and Future King* and the Broadway musical *Camelot*, modern readers and audiences have become accustomed to scenes of the Arthurian court gathering flowers and frolicking in the fields.⁵⁹ Wolfram von Eschenbach, in his thirteenth-century German romance *Parzival*, seems to assert that May scenes were similarly prominent in the earliest Arthurian tradition: "All that was ever told of Arthur, the man of the merry month of May, happened at Whitsun or at blossom-time in spring."⁶⁰ However, a glance through the major medieval versions of the legend reveals that, while authors frequently mention the late spring feast of Whitsun, actual descriptions of Maytime and accounts of May festivities are rare and usually marginal.⁶¹ Not until

⁵⁹ Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Idylls of the King* (New York: New American Library, 1961), 225; T. H. White, *The Once and Future King* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1958), 526, 570.

⁶⁰ *Parzival*, trans. A. T. Hatto (London: Penguin, 1980), 147.

⁶¹ Whitsun or Pentecost, the seventh Sunday after Easter, frequently fell in mid to late May. Chrétien refers briefly to Pentecostal feasts in three of his four influential Arthurian romances: the *Knight of the Cart*, *Cliges*, and the *Story of the Grail*. See *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*, trans. David Staines (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 213, 257, 374, 445, 448. I found only one mention in medieval Arthurian texts of a festival specifically celebrating the spring season: the

the appearance of Malory's *Morte Darthur* do the month of May and its festivities begin to play a central role in Arthurian literature. And Malory's May has attained a hold on the reader's imagination that has only intensified through the centuries, as nineteenth- and twentieth-century paintings of Malory's Guenevere—Maying, framed in flowers, her face inscrutable—attest.⁶²

I will close by returning to where I began, with Nicholas Watson's comments on empathy in medieval thought and in medievalist scholarship. For, like the scholarly quest in Watson's schema, Malory's representation of May, I contend, exhibits "a strain that figures both the difficulty and ineffable value of the fusion of present and past it attempts."⁶³ Through the injunction to May and the subsequent mingling of blood and roses, Malory communicates the difficulty and the value, the pain and the pleasure, of a longing for the past. And the bloody flowers of the *Morte Darthur* may have something to teach us about our own desires—scholarly and otherwise—for past worlds, and for those flowers always just beyond our reach.⁶⁴

Maying at Mark's court in Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan*. See *Tristan*, trans. A. T. Hatto (London: Penguin, 1967), 48–50. This May celebration, like the *Parzival* reference, occurs in the German tradition, and it does not involve Arthur's court directly. The *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, one of Malory's sources, briefly mentions 1 May as the day when Arthur defeated the Romans: *King Arthur's Death: The Middle English Stanzaic Morte Arthur and Alliterative Morte Arthure*, ed. Larry D. Benson, rev. Edward E. Foster (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1994), 203.

⁶² See especially John Collier's *Queen Guinevere's Maying*, Bradford Art Galleries and Museums, Yorkshire; and Arthur Rackham's *How Queen Guenever Rode A-Maying into the Woods and Fields Beside Westminster, The Romance of King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table*, abr. from Malory's *Morte D'arthur* by Alfred W. Pollard (New York: Macmillan, 1917).

⁶³ Watson, 70.

⁶⁴ This article is based on a chapter of my doctoral dissertation, "Florescence and Defloration: Maytime in Chaucer and Malory" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2003). I thank Robert W. Hanning, Sandra Pierson Prior, Margaret Pappano, and Lisa Cooper for their helpful suggestions.

CENSORING DISOBEDIENT SUBJECTS:
NARRATIVES OF TREASON AND ROYAL AUTHORITY
IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

E. Kay Harris

As is well known, Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur* includes a complaint against Englishmen who support Mordred in the war he wages against his father King Arthur:

Muche people drew unto hym [Mordred]; for than was the comyn voyce amonge them that with kynge Arthur was never othir lyff but warre and stryff, and with sir Mordrede was grete joy and blysse. Thus was kynge Arthur depraved, and evyll seyde off; and many there were that kynge Arthur had brought up of nought, and gyffyn them londis, that myght nat than say hym a good worde.

Lo ye all Englysshemen, se ye nat what a myschyff here was? For he that was the moste kynge and nobelyst knyght of the worlde, and moste loved the felyshyp of noble knyghtes, and by hym they all were upholdyn, and yet myght nat thes Englysshemen holde them contente with hym . . . (1229)¹

This passage offers two conflicting views of the past: one view asserts that Arthur's reign has been filled with "warre and stryff," but the other remembers Arthur as an exemplary king who upheld and "brought up of nought" all those who now speak "evyll" of him.

In my paper, I relate these disparate recollections of the past and the evil words spoken about king Arthur to two facets of the prosecution of treason in mid-fifteenth-century England: (1) declarations of attainder against those identified as traitors to the king and (2) the crime of imagining the death of the king. Bills of attainder not only offered the court a means to confiscate lands and goods held by enemies of the king, but they also provided a means to dispossess these persons of intangible property as well. In effect, by declaring persons to be disabled at law or dead in the law and their blood

¹ All quotations of this text are taken from *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, ed. Eugene Vinaver and rev. by P. J. Field, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) by page number.

to be corrupt, bills of attainder deprived them of the civil status or life that they had once enjoyed, reidentifying them as social outcasts. Further, because attainder was not the result of a trial or due process but was in itself a declaration of guilt,² this form of punishment prevented those it targeted from speaking in their own defense before the law. Removing the opportunity for an accused to speak for himself and declaring a person to be dead in the law and corrupt in blood, bills of attainder speak in a sovereign voice to assert the power to enact the words they declare. Similarly, judgments in cases of imagining the death of the king frequently cite that unkind words spoken about the king could bring about his death. These judgments, therefore, also ascribe to words the potential power to act, to cause an event to happen.

Through such legal avenues as attainder and the prosecution of unkind or treasonous words, the king and his jurists, I will suggest, attempted to control the “domain of the sayable,”³ that is, to control who could and could not speak and what could and could not be said. I will also suggest that one effect of this type of censoring was the production of an official, cultural memory of treason that sought to make one type of subject possible, one loyal to the king, and to make another type, a disloyal subject, impossible. Hence, the regulation of subjects through language also entails the regulation of memory to effect, or at least bolster, royal authority. In the discussion that follows I compare the efficacy of such fifteenth-century legal practices to control disobedient subjects to the treatment of treason in the last books of Malory’s *Morte Darthur*. While fifteenth-century records, particularly those that relate to the turmoil of the Wars of the Roses, suggest a limited success in the use of attainder and the prosecution of treasonous speech in producing obedient subjects, Malory’s text without explicit use of such censoring strategies offers an idealized fulfillment of this aim.

² *The Law of Treason in England in the Latter Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 176. See my discussion of this point in “Evidence against Lancelot and Guinevere in the *Morte Darthur*: Treason by Imagination,” *Exemplaria* 7 (1995), 200–202.

³ The phrase is Judith Butler’s. See *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (Routledge: New York, 1997), 133.

Recording the past and future: attainder and treason by word

As I have mentioned, the *Morte Darthur*'s complaint against Englishmen incorporates two conflicting memories of the past—one that records the view of “Englysshemen” who now support Mordred in his war against his father and one that regards Arthur as an exemplary king and charges Mordred's supporters with ingratitude. Hence, the passage allows two perspectives or two voices to speak. Bills of attainder, however, deliberately exclude conflicting voices by recording the treasonous history of the attainted as justification for punishment. Acts of attainder, therefore, may be seen as narratives that offer an official, pro-royalist version of the past.

In its select reporting of the past, for example, the preamble to the 1459 attainder of Richard, duke of York, his family, and supporters, offers evidence of York's treason by highlighting the duke's ingratitude to Henry VI:

Please it your Highness to calle to youre noble remembrance, howe ye had Richard Duc of York in his yong age, in your most high presence and noble Court, and hym all that tyme cherrished and favoured; and afterward at gretter age, for the love, trust and affiance that Ye had in his persone, made hym youre Lieutenaunt of youre Realme of Fraunce and Duchie of Normandie, and created his ii eldest sonnes Erles, and granted him Offices and grete benefettes . . . so that it could not be thought a subget . . . to have had more cause to have been true, obeisaunt, and diligent to serve and love his Sovereigne Lord then he had. These benefittis and many other that myght be rehersed notwithstanding, howe falsely and traiterously he hath acquite hym to youre Highness, ayenst God, nature, all trouth, humanitee, and contrary to his Ligeaunce, howe be it youre Grace list not to take displeasure thereof; yet it is openly knowen to youre liege people his subtell . . . his fals and traiterous ymaginations, conspiracies, feates, and diligent labours born up with colourable lies, compassed by the most unherd means that ever did eny Subget to his Soverayne Lorde.⁴

Cast in terms of remembrance, this passage creates and codifies an official memory of York's relationship to his king that justifies the punishment of attainder: The duke failed to acknowledge the debt he owed to his king who had through his great generosity “cherrished

⁴ *Rotuli Parliamentorum: ut petitiones, et placita in parlamento*, ed. J. Strachey, et al. 6 vols. (London: n.p., 1767), 5:346.

and favoured" him and his family.⁵ Malory's complaint against Englishmen resonates with this narrative: Like Henry VI and the ungrateful duke of York, Arthur is repaid with ingratitude by subjects whom he had "brought out of nought."

And this history goes on to note that despite having sworn oaths of allegiance to King Henry VI on three separate occasions, in 1452, 1457, and 1458, the duke persisted in treasonous activities. Indeed, in the 1452 oath, York had agreed that should he afterwards do anything "by way of fait or otherwise against your royal estate and obeissance" then at that time he would deserve to be attainted, that is, to be "unable and held and taken as an untrue and openly foresworn man and unable to all manner of worship, estate, and degree, be it such as I now occupy or any other that might in any wise grow unto me hereafter."⁶ These words which this history attributes to York do allow his voice to be heard, but it is a voice that reinforces his duplicitous ingratitude. The narrative blatantly excludes any story or event that would work in York's defense. It, therefore, censors the past by choosing what to say and not to say about this relationship of king and subject.

While the justification for attainder resides in the past, its attempt to regulate the "domain of the sayable" extends into the present and future. Attainder's corruption of blood provision and its use in punishing those who were already dead reveal its range through time. For not only did a corruption of blood provision designate the blood of an attainted traitor to be corrupt, but it also extended the designation of corrupt blood to his descendants, born and unborn.⁷ The bill of attainder against Jack Cade, for instance, records not only the forfeiture of goods, lands, and income, but it also declares that his

⁵ The Yorkists were intentionally excluded from the parliament that passed the bills of attainder against them, and they along with certain chroniclers of the period proclaimed the injustice of the action taken against them. This outcry generated another piece of royalist propaganda defending the king's use of attainder, a text often attributed to Sir John Fortescue. See *Somnium Vigilantis*, ed. J. Gilson, *English Historical Review* 26 (1911), 512–25.

⁶ Exchequer Miscellanea 8/19, 8/20, 8/21, quoted in Cora Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, 2 vols. (London: Cass, 1923), 1:17. Cf. *Rot. Parl.*, 5:346–347.

⁷ Parliamentary records also indicate that if other persons received or comforted one who had been attainted, then they too risked the punishment of attainder. The disease of attainder, therefore, could escape the family line to infect non-family members. See *Rot. Parl.* 5:213.

blood was corrupt; hence, his heirs, referred to as “his blood,” were “disabled for ever.”⁸ Likewise, the attainder of York and his allies required that they be “disabled for ever to have or enjoye any enheritance in any wise hereafter . . . and in lyke wise their heires.”⁹ In these two examples, Cade and the Yorkists are treated as diseased persons who have infected their descendants with their tainted blood. Corruption of blood, therefore, operates in much the same way as does the concept of original sin. Just as all humanity inherits the sin of Adam and Eve, the descendants of Cade and the Yorkists inherit the treason, the tainted blood, of their fathers. Accordingly, their descendants suffered civil death and, thus, were unable to enjoy any of the benefits that civil life afforded.

Petitions for the reversal of attainders offer evidence of the injury, the social death, that attainder could inflict. Henry Percy’s petition (c. 1460) to reverse the attainder of his father highlights the punishment’s adverse effects on his family:

. . . by the force of an Acte made ayenst his said Fader, by the name of Henry late Erle of Northumerlond . . . the same late Erle, among other persons, was unable to have, hold, enherite or joie, any name of dignitie, estate or preeminence, within this Reame . . . and the heires of the same late Erle, were unable to clayme or have by the same late Erle, any suche name, estate or preeminence.¹⁰

It seems, then, that corruption of blood relates to time in several ways. It extends back into the past, since it helps to explain why a person could commit such a crime as treason against the king, and it also imposes a civil death that continues into the future of the attainted and the future of his descendants. Indeed, in these cases, civil death constitutes the patrimonial legacy. Taken together, these aspects of attainder create a cultural memory of treason that extends through time by matching this crime with the dire consequences it sets into play.

The practice of attainting the dead reveals another dimension of the legal production of a cultural memory of treason. Since attainting the dead succeeds the event of physical death, it recasts physical death in terms of a legal or civil death. In the posthumous attainder

⁸ *Rot., Parl.* 5:224.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 5:349.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5:389. For other examples, see 6:617.

of Jack Cade, for example, this redefinition of Cade is expressed as a sovereign linguistic regulation of memory. The parliamentary record declares that Cade's "name, fame, actys, and dedys, been to be put out of every true Cristen mannys language and memories for ever."¹¹ The corresponding statute uses similar terms: Cade's "Name, Fame, Acts, and Feats be to be removed out of the Speech and Mind of every faithful Christian Man perpetually. . . ."¹² The linguistic efficacy that the law ascribes to itself contrasts strikingly with its representation of Cade's linguistic incapacity to say who he is, since it is recorded that he called himself "sometime Mortimer, sometime Captain of Kent." Further, this act asserts that Cade and his deeds constitute the unspeakable. Both are to be erased from memory and language. Thus, by punishing the already deceased Cade, his attainder comprehends a much larger audience: "every faithful Christian Man." For Cade's attainder preemptively censors these subjects both in their use of language and in their recollection of the past. Through its censoring strategies, therefore, attainder may be seen as an instrument of law that works in a productive capacity: to foster loyalty and obedience in the king's subjects.¹³

With its capacity to diffuse itself through the body, through time, and beyond death, attainder projects itself as an eternal word that evokes or mimics the divine power to both name and effect what it names. This sovereign voice speaks correctively and punitively to dispossess subjects of the status and properties they once held. While attainder finds its justification in the past, the opposite is often the case in the prosecution of imagining the death of the king. In these instances, it is often the law's construction of the future that justifies convictions in these cases. Like attainder's detection of corrupt blood within the body of a traitor, the prosecution of an imagined act of treason grants the law access into an area that otherwise would seem off limits: the mind or the imagination of the king's subjects.¹⁴ It, therefore, attributes an omniscience to the law which in turn enables

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5:265.

¹² 31 Henry VI, c. 1, *Statutes of the Realm*, 11 vols. (London: Dawsons, 1963), 2:360.

¹³ See Butler, 132.

¹⁴ See my "Evidence against Lancelot and Guinevere," 191–192 and 207 and also Paul Strohm, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation: 1399–1422* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 21–27.

those who speak in its name to reveal what is hidden—treasonous thoughts—and to predict the consequences that could follow from such thoughts if they should go undetected.

Speaking ill of the king was one way for the crown to establish an act of imagined treason. Judges in these cases reasoned that unkind words spoken against the king could lead his subjects to withdraw their love from him. In turn, the people's disaffection for their king could cause him to suffer life-threatening grief and sorrow. In one case it was reasoned that by predicting when Henry VI would die, the duchess of Gloucester, Roger Bolingbroke, and Thomas Southwell had imagined the king's death. They had intended to "withdraw the cordial love [of the people] from the king himself . . . this same king would take such a sadness in his heart through the knowledge of their [predictions], which have been detected and manifested, that he would quickly die from the sadness and grief of them."¹⁵

Similarly during the reign of Edward IV, a charge against John Stacey, Thomas Burdet, and Thomas Black stated that on May 26, 1475, they had "in hope of destroying the cordial love the people had for the king and thereby shortening his life by sadness . . . declared to others that the prince of Wales was to die very shortly."¹⁶ In 1402, Henry IV and his judges had used the same type of formulation, citing the destruction of the people's love for the king and the consequent life-threatening grief that it could have caused in him.¹⁷ Occuring over a period of seventy years, these judgments establish a cause and effect sequence that first detects the imagined act of treason by constructing a series of events that *could* follow from it. Although J. G. Bellamy notes that accusations of treason in the form of the conditional were a Tudor innovation,¹⁸ these fifteenth-century cases of treasonous speech are premised on the condition that if these words find an audience, then they could lead to the death of the king. Seeming to offer a typical narrative sequence that moves from present to future, the judgments actually work in the

¹⁵ *Ab ipso Rege cordialemm amorem retraherent et idem Rex per notitiam illarum detectionis et manifestationis caperet talem tristiam in corde suo iiden per ilarum tristia ac dolerem cicus moreret.* P.R.O., K.B. 9/72/14, quoted in Bellmay, *Law of Treason*, Appendix III, 237. My translation.

¹⁶ Bellamy, *The Law of Treason*, 127.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹⁸ *The Tudor Law of Treason* (Routledge: London, 1979), 21.

reverse direction. It is the future, what could happen, that retroactively determines conviction in these cases.

At this point, I want to make a leap between the fifteenth-century and our own time by connecting the logic that underwrites the prosecution of treasonous speech to the logic that prohibits gays and lesbians in the U. S. military from speaking about their sexuality. And I do so as a way to point out that the prosecution of speech based on its possible future ramifications is neither solely a medieval nor solely a post-modern phenomenon, as we might be led to think. The attention given to words of injury or hate speech in our own post-modern era provides an important link between it and a "pre-modern" past. For both the prohibition against treasonous speech and the prohibition against declarations of homosexuality implicitly ascribe to these words the power to conjure, respectively, the deed of treason and the practice of homosexuality.¹⁹ Stipulating that sexual orientation "will not be a bar to service unless manifested in homosexual conduct," the military's policy goes on to define homosexual conduct in three ways: "as a homosexual act, a statement that the member is homosexual or bisexual, or a marriage or an attempted marriage to someone of the same sex."²⁰ By this definition, conduct, a way or a pattern of doing things, is manifested by a person's statement that he is homosexual or bisexual. Identifying a statement of self-identification as conduct, as pattern or way of doing things, this policy, as Judith Butler has argued, not only translates an act of speech into a homosexual act but translates it into a series, a pattern, of homosexual acts.²¹ Like the imagined consequences following from treasonous words, this policy also imagines what could follow from this type of self-identification: that is, the policy imagines that homosexual acts could follow from such a declaration and

¹⁹ The similarity between fifteenth-century cases of treason by word and the military policy regulating declarations of homosexuality struck me while reading Judith Butler's analysis of the military prohibition in *Excitable Speech*. Since then I have found that some judges who have heard cases regarding the military policy have connected it to the prosecution of imagined forms of treason. See Taylor Flynn, "Of Communism, Treason, and Addiction: An Evaluation of Novel Challenges to the Military's Anti-Gay Policy," *Iowa Law Review*, 80 (1995), 1031–1035.

²⁰ "The Pentagon's New Policy Guidelines on Homosexuals in the Military," *The New York Times*, July 20, 1993, A14, qtd. in Butler, 111.

²¹ *Ibid.* See also Janet Halley, "The Status/Conduct Distinction in the 1993 Revision to Military Anti-Gay Policy," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* (1996), 159–252.

render harm to the military community which, in turn, would threaten national security.²²

Further, the pivotal metaphor of disease operative in the legal diagnosis of corruption of blood imposed on traitors by an act of attainder is also operative in judgments of treason by word and in the regulation of homosexuality in the military. As Butler has observed, the efficacy attributed to a declaration of homosexuality “is not simply that the utterance performs the sexuality of which it speaks, but that it transmits sexuality through speech: the utterance is figured as a site of contagion. . . .”²³ For fifteenth-century jurists, treasonous speech works in a similar fashion. Finding that unkind words spoken about the king could cause his people to withdraw their love from him, these jurists fear that such speech would infect those who hear it with the disease of treason. Nor does the infection stop with the king’s subjects, but rather in the scenario painted by judgments in these cases, it continues to spread, threatening the life of the king himself. By using the metaphor of disease in these judgments and in acts of attainder, the law constructs treason as a contagion that spreads through blood and through language. Likewise, the prohibition that bans homosexual self-identification lends to these utterances a contagion-like quality that “*acts upon* its listener in a prescribed or mechanical way.”²⁴ These words can lead others to engage in the practice of homosexuality just as treasonous words can lead others to withdraw their love from the king and, therefore, commit treason. Both fifteenth-century discourse on treason and the military prohibitions against self-declarations of homosexuality, therefore, imagine that words have the performative power to destroy their respective communities if such censoring measures are not set in place.

The spread of treason as a disease through language is implicitly registered in Cade’s attainder. Since the law deems Cade’s name and deeds to be unspeakable, it suggests that speaking of these things would transmit Cade’s crime to others. But since no fifteenth-century English king died from the sorrow of having unkind words spoken about him, it is only within the law that treasonous words seem to have the power to do what they say. Nevertheless, the ascription of

²² See Flynn, 1031.

²³ Butler, 108. See also 110.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 113.

efficacy to treasonous speech enhances the power of the law, that is, the law has the authority to speak the unspeakable. Moreover, by modeling treason as a disease, these narratives of treason by word and attainder not only project treason as a disease that moves through the blood and through language but as a disease that spreads from past to present to future and/or from future back into the present. Hence, with their interest in producing an official memory of the past that silences the words of ungrateful subjects and in imagining a future fraught with treasonous words, these narratives saturate time, extending the jurisdictional reach of royal justice and simultaneously calling forth a pervasive figure of royal sovereign power: a physician-king who through these legal forms removes diseased limbs from the body politic.²⁵

Reworking the past: the distribution of sovereign speech

While attainder and the prosecution of treasonous words do produce an image of authority that sees all, knows all, and renders judgment accordingly, these legal practices also inadvertently imagine the vulnerability, the fragmentation of this authority. For if by saying unkind words about the king, subjects are able to dispossess him of his people's affection and bring about his death, then the king's subjects have the power or the potential power to enact what they speak. Sovereign authority in matters of speech is distributed rather than consolidated by the law.²⁶ And, too, if subjects have the power to enact treason through their words, then it would seem that all treasonous words would work in the same way, whether they are spoken by subjects or are inscribed in law. Further, if the legal discourse regulating treasonous thoughts and speech imagines how the king may be harmed, then it takes on a generative aspect. The preamble

²⁵ In his treatise on the relation between natural law and royal succession, Sir John Fortescue, chief justice of the king's bench during the reign of Henry VI, observes: "For as the physician takes care of the sick man, so doth every king of his kingdom; for as disease is the weakness of bodies, so vice is the weakness of souls. . . . [S]ometimes the surgeon cuts off the affected limb, when he cannot save the rest of the body by another means . . ." *The Works of Sir John Fortescue*, collected, arranged, and translated by Thomas (Fortescue) Lord Clermont, 2 vols. (London: Printed for Private Distribution, 1869), 1:216.

²⁶ Cf. Butler, 47–48.

to a 1531 law succinctly illustrates this point when it states that it intends to regulate “new treasons” not yet “thought of.”²⁷ Attempting to prevent treason by imagining new forms in which this crime could be carried out, the legal record contributes to its own vulnerability and the vulnerability of the king whom it seeks to protect.

The fact that the issue of treason had to be addressed or imagined by the law indicates that neither the king nor the law consistently possessed the authority to declare and thus bring about the loyalty that subjects owed to their king. But this is not to say that attainder or judgments in cases of treasonous speech were without efficacy. As mentioned above, Henry Percy’s petition to reverse the attainder of his father affirms that attainder did injure his family. G. L. Harriss correctly surmizes that the nobility’s loyalty to a king was determined “less by the hope of further gain than by the fear that the king might seek to disinherit them of the family estates in order to reward others.”²⁸ But the success of attainder depended much on the willingness of the attainted to accept his new identity as a dispossessed traitor, a social outcast. In some cases, acts of attainder provided the very terms through which attainted persons reproduced and reclaimed their legitimacy. The post-attainder career of Richard, duke of York, offers a prime example.²⁹ Yet had these appropriations of attainder failed, those who risked this strategy could easily have been convicted of treasonous words.

As I have mentioned, parliament in 1459 enacted attainders against York and many of his allies. The following year, however, brought a change of fortune for the Yorkists. In July, while the duke of York was in Ireland, his supporters won a decisive battle against the Lancastrians. They captured Henry VI and gained control of the government, all the while professing their continued loyalty to the king. Yet the attainders legislated against them in 1459 undermined their

²⁷ Bellamy, *Tudor Law of Treason*, 28.

²⁸ “The King and His Subjects,” in *Fifteenth-Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England*, ed. Rosemary Horrow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 18.

²⁹ The retraction of Sir John Fortescue’s pro-Lancastrian writings as a condition imposed on him by the Yorkist Edward IV for the reversal of his attainder provides another important example. See *Works of Sir John Fortescue*, 2:523–541. For a discussion of Fortescue’s rehabilitation, see my “Turning Adam’s Disobedience into Opportunity: The Acquisition of Property and Identity in Sir John Fortescue’s theory of Natural Law,” *Florilegium* 17 (2000), 267–270.

legitimacy. Accordingly, a parliament was to be convened on 7 October to annul this legislation. Just prior to the opening of parliament, Richard made a triumphal return to England. Then, on 16 October, after parliament had convened, the duke "brought into the Parlement Chambre a writyng, conteignyng the clayme and title of the right, that the seid Duc pretended unto the Coronas of Englonde and of France, and Lordship of Ireland. . . ." ³⁰ York's "writyng" was opened and read aloud by the chancellor to the lords on the day it was received. And although the 1459 acts of attainder had been annulled a few days before, ³¹ York's argument in certain key features may be seen as a reworking or retelling of the act of attainder that had declared him a traitor to the king.

York's claim to the throne caught many of his own supporters by surprise, and it is evident from the parliamentary roll that his "writyng" caused a quandary throughout various levels of government. Deciding that they could not reply to York without obtaining the consent of the king, the lords agreed that "they all shuld goo unto the Kyng, to declare and open the seid mater unto his Highness." Henry VI then delegated to them the task of finding "such thyngs" that could be "ledyd ayenst the cleyme and title of the seid Duc." ³² In an effort to do this, the lords turned to the king's bench. But the justices reasoned that they could offer no opinion since the matter was "so high" and "above the law and passed their lernyng." The lords then summoned the king's sergeants-at-law for their advice. But they, too, declined to render an opinion, arguing that if the matter was too high for the king's bench, it was certainly too high for them. ³³

The task of finding "such thyngs" to lay against the duke's claim devolved on the lords alone, and they devised several objections to it. Among them were:

FIRST, it is thought that the Lordes of this lond must nedes calle to their remembraunce, the grete Othes the which they have made to the Kyng our Soverayn Lord, the whiche may be leyde to the seid Duc of York, and that the Lordes may not breke thoo Othes.

³⁰ *Rot. Parl.* 5:375. See also, Ralph A. Griffiths who describes the effect of Richard's claim on his supporters as one of surprise and disbelief, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 818–19.

³¹ *Rot. Parl.*, 5:374 and *Statutes of the Realm*, 39 Henry VI, c. 1, 2:378–79.

³² *Rot. Parl.*, 5:376.

³³ *Ibid.*

ITEM, it is thought that it is to be called to remembraunce, the grete and notable Acts of Parlements, made in dyvers Parlements of dyvers of the Kyngs Progenitors, the which Acts be sufficient and resonable to be leyde ageyn the title of the seid Duc of York. . . .

ITEM, it is thought that ther is to be leyde acyn the seid title, dyvers entayls made to the heires males as for the Corone of Englund, as it may appere by divers Cronicles and Parlements.³⁴

Recalling the past, these objections summon a record of laws and personal obligation in support of the Lancastrian line over against York's claim to the throne.

After receiving these objections, York answered them in writing. With regard to the acts and laws of parliament that entailed the crown to the heirs of Henry IV, he asserted that only one such law existed, not several, and it was enacted during the sixth year of the reign of Henry IV. Further, York argued, had Henry IV obtained the crowns of England and France "by title of enheritaunce, discent or succession, he neither [would have] neded nor wold have desired or made thym to be graunted to hym in seche wise. . . ."³⁵ In this instance, the law, according to York, does not protect the right of the Lancastrians to rule but fabricates the illusion of a right for the purpose of obscuring the illegitimacy of the Lancastrian line. Moreover, because of this deception, the law does not accord "with Godds law and all natural lawes. . . ." Accordingly, it has no "force or effect ayenst hym that is right enheritor of the seid Coroness. . . ."³⁶ By subordinating the 1406 statute to higher laws and finding it in conflict with them, York explicitly removes himself from the statute's authority and implicitly invalidates the attainder enacted against him in 1459.

With regard to the oaths he had sworn to Henry VI, York reasons that all oaths are spiritual in nature and "that every man, under the peine of everlastyng dampnation, is bounded to obeye to the lawe and commaundements of God. . . . [therefore], of this bonde and duetee of obedyence to Godds lawe, noo man may discharge

³⁴ The other two objections were that York had never worn the arms of Lionel, the third son of Edward III, through whom he traced his descent and that Henry IV, the first Lancastrian king, had not claimed the throne as a conqueror but as the rightful heir of Henry III.

³⁵ *Rot. Parl.*, 5:377. Cf. the justification used by Richard III in his conquest for the throne in 1483, *Rot. Parl.*, 6:240.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

hymself by his owen dede or act, promisse or oath. . . .” Hence, these oaths did not discharge York from the duty he owed to God. Indeed, they constitute an “offence to God and conscience.”³⁷ Now, in order to fulfill his spiritual duty, he must withdraw his allegiance to the Lancastrian king and claim his own royal identity. By expounding the spiritual nature of oaths, York does not dismiss their importance but rather shifts the ground of their authority from a relation between subject and king to a relation between man and God. Obligated to God, York is neither subject to an oath nor to an act of parliament that does not accord with natural and divine law.

In light of judgments in cases of treason by word, York’s answer may easily be construed as treasonous. For he not only announces that he has withdrawn his own allegiance from the king, but he blatantly urges Henry’s subjects to do the same: “all other persons, and namely the Peres and Lordes of this Reaume may, and by the lawe of God and man aught, to helpe and assist hym [Richard] in truth and justice, notwithstondyng any Oath of Feaute or other by hym or theym herebefore made.”³⁸ In effect, then, York speaks the words that the law fears will be one of the consequences of treasonous speech, namely, he openly withdraws his own allegiance from the king and encourages others to do the same. York’s words are blatantly designed to “infect” others to turn against the king.

And in this instance, the duke’s “treasonous words” work at least partially in the way that judgments in such cases imagined that they would. For from a Lancastrian perspective, they infect those who hear them with treason by causing them to withdraw their oaths of fealty from Henry VI and the Lancastrian line. Indeed, within the space of eight days, from the reading of York’s claim in parliament on 16 October to the discovery of a solution, “a meane,” on 24 October 1460, the legitimacy of the Lancastrian line of royal succession was challenged and defeated by a subject who had once been attainted for treason. Although Henry VI was allowed to retain his “dignitie Roial” for the rest of his life, he could not transfer this dignity to his son. Or to put it another way, he could not transfer what he in effect no longer possessed: his son and the Lancastrian

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

line were disinherited in much the same way that attainder had disinherited York's descendants.³⁹

The successful outcome of York's challenge is in an important sense foreshadowed on the day his claim was first read in parliament. The lords' failure, for instance, to enlist the active assistance of Henry VI, the justices of the king's bench, or the sergeants-at-law in defense of the Lancastrian line registers a momentary but nevertheless momentous incapacity of these representatives of the law to speak on this matter.⁴⁰ Their speechlessness occurs once again when after receiving York's rebuttal to the lords' objections, the parliamentary record offers no further challenge to him. We do not read, for instance, that the lords return to the justices of the king's bench or to the sergeants-at-law to solicit their assistance once again. Rather, this parliamentary narrative moves from York's rebuttal to the observation that "for asmoche as it is thought by all the Lordes, that the title of the seid Duc cannot be defeted, and in eschuyng of the grete inconvenients that may ensue, a meane was founde to save the Kyngs honour and astate and to apease the seid Duc. . . ."⁴¹ After reaching this conclusion, the lords report "the meane" to the king who then accepts it.

The effectiveness of York's words was, of course, backed up by the presence of a large Yorkist military force in London. However, the duke's claim needed a rationale, a narrative, of legitimacy, and one that would appeal not only to a reluctant parliament but to many of his own allies as well. And York provided this rationale by appropriating the terms of his attainder. Reinterpreting its logic of ingratitude and foresworn oaths, York rescripted his past by transforming ingratitude and disloyalty to the king into acts of conscience and of faithfulness to God. Through this retelling of his past, York effected a revision of his present and future that differed greatly from the disablement that his attainder had imposed and ordained for him. In this instance, York's success patently illustrates the failure of the Lancastrian line to narrate effectively its royal authority

³⁹ The Lancastrians and their supporters were targets of attainder in 1461. See *Rot. Parl.* 5:476–482.

⁴⁰ As Veikko Litzen has observed, Chief Justice Fortescue paid for this silence "throughout his long exile; the answers to Richard Duke of York were to be his life work." "A War of Roses and Lilies," *Suomalaisen Tiedeakateman Toimituksia Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae*, 173 (1971), 13.

⁴¹ *Rot. Parl.*, 5:377.

even though it had at its disposal such powerful legal instruments as attainder and the prosecution of imagined forms of treason. Ultimately, Henry VI and his jurists failed to regulate what the Yorkists could and could not say, and, hence, they failed to instill in these subjects the loyalty that would secure the throne for Henry and his descendants.

Self-accusing subjects: treason and the king in Malory

When juxtaposed to the narrative sovereignty figured in acts of attainder or in the prosecution of cases of treasonous speech or even when juxtaposed to York's rewriting of his attainder, the *Morte Darthur* appears deficient on all counts. Indeed, as rebellion and charges and counter-charges of treason sprawl over the last two books of the *Morte Darthur*, Malory's text seems far removed from offering even a semblance of sovereign authority. Yet evidence from preceding tales suggests a more unified perception of Arthur's royalty and his effectiveness as a king. When, for example, Rome demands tribute from him, Arthur searches the chronicles to find proof of his royalty, and he reports his findings—"all his trew auncettryes"—to the knights of the Round Table (192). They, in turn, offer their unqualified support to him in his debate with the Romans. A historical record, therefore, validates Arthur's royal line of descent and his action against Rome. Further, in "The Wedding of King Arthur," friends and enemies alike acknowledge him as the head of a fellowship that "may never be broken" (118). There is, then, a common or shared recognition of Arthur as a legitimate and extraordinarily effective king. As the senators of Rome describe him to Lucius, "of al the soveraynes that we sawe ever he is the royallyst kynge that lyvyth on erthe" (192). And, of course, Arthur is "crowned Emperoure by the Poopys hondis, with al the royalté in the worlde to welde for ever" (245).

But the two disparate readings of Arthur's rule, recorded in Malory's complaint to "Englysshmen," point to a loss of this common perspective. Moreover, many passages in the last two books of the *Morte Darthur* indicate that discrete recollections of the past have supplanted a common memory, although there are attempts on the part of several knights to evoke such a memory. When, for instance, Agravain threatens to tell Arthur of Lancelot's love for the queen, Gawain

attempts to persuade him not to do it: "[Y]e must remember," Gawain reminds Agravain, "how often tymes Sir Launcelot hath rescowed the kynge and the quene . . . methynks such noble dedis and kyndness shuld be remembirde" (1162). Lancelot, speaking in his own defense to the king, asks Arthur "to remembir what I have done in many placis . . ." (1192). And soon afterward, he observes to the king: "sir, lyars ye have lystened, and that hath caused grete debate betwyxte you and me. For tyme hath bene, my lorde Arthur, that ye were gretly pleased with me . . ." (1197). Addressing Gawain who is angry with him for killing his brothers, Lancelot also asks that his good deeds be recalled: "mesymth ye ought . . . to remembir this" (1199). In these instances, the endeavors to recall a common memory fail. Agravain does not confirm Gawain's memory of Lancelot's good deeds. Neither does Arthur or Gawain validate Lancelot's recollection of the past. In point of fact, Arthur counters that he has done more for Lancelot and his family than he has done for other knights. Lancelot, therefore, ought to remember the king's kindnesses.

These competing versions of the past along with the fragmented view of Arthur's rule given us in Malory's complaint seem to dispossess the king of his former glory. That is, no authoritative narrative seems to link the "royallyst kynge" of the past to the king of the present whose kingdom is destroyed by treason and civil war. Such dissonant interpretations of the past support John F. Plummer's assessment that linguistic chaos defines Arthur's court in its last days.⁴² And in this linguistic chaos, Arthur, Lancelot, Mordred, Gawain, and the "Englysshmen" of Malory's complaint seem to speak different languages as they remember the past differently and make claims for various political realities. Even the inscription on Arthur's tomb, which identifies him as the once and future king, draws attention to the fact that he is noticeably absent from the present. Yet the inscription also promises that what once was will become the future. Or, in other words, it promises that the past seals the future, re-enacting itself again and again and, thus, dissolving differences that would break time into past, present, and future.⁴³ The question,

⁴² "*Tunc se Coeperunt non Intelligere*: The Image of Language in Malory's Last Books," *Studies in Malory*, ed. James W. Spisak (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1985), 161.

⁴³ This part of my argument is informed by Hannah Arendt's discussion of time in *Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin, 1993), 3–16.

however, is: does the *Morte Darthur* enact its promise. And I think that it does.

To answer this question, it is important to note once again that Arthur was once described as the "the royallyst kynge that lyvyth on erthe" (192). Further, before Arthur pursues Lancelot as a traitor or fights a civil war instigated by his own son—circumstances that certainly call the king's authority into question—the *Morte Darthur* insistently projects an image of Arthur that places him above other men. And it does so by constructing episodes that reveal that the king possesses knowledge that no one else does. In the "Tristram," for example, when others cannot identify the knight who has killed Sir Galar donne, Arthur upon hearing of the deed immediately identifies the unknown knight as Lancelot. And when Lancelot announces that he will not go to a tournament but, nevertheless, appears on the field carrying a covered shield and wearing a red sleeve to prevent anyone from recognizing him, Arthur alone knows that the disguised knight is Lancelot.

Further, in "The Healing of Sir Urry," a tale unique to the *Morte Darthur*, Malory reports that King Arthur uses the event of Urry's illness to gain knowledge: "to wyte whych was the moste nobelyste knyght amonge them all" (1149). Urry has come to Arthur's realm in search of the noblest knight in the world who, as he has been told, will heal him of his wound by touching it. And though Arthur touches Urry, the text removes the king from this contest of nobility. As Arthur himself explains to Urry's mother, "And for to gyff all othir men off worshyp a currayge, I myselff woll asay to handyll your sonne . . . nat presumyng uppon me that I am so worthy to heale youre son be my dedis, but I woll corrayge othir men of worshyp to do as I woll do" (1146). Arthur, therefore, is an observer, not a participant as other knights are, and one who expects to gain knowledge from what he sees.

When Lancelot appears on the scene, he refuses to touch the wounded Sir Urry as Arthur has commanded him to do, fearing that his worship will be lost. After a second refusal, Arthur openly challenges Lancelot's reason for not doing as he has been told: "'Sir, ye take hit wronge,' seyde kynge Arthur, 'for ye shall nat do hit for no presumpcion, but for to beare us felyshyp, insomuche as ye be a felow of the Rounde Table'" (1151). Arthur delivers this reprimand in a public or common voice, as one who speaks for the fellowship of the Round Table and hence reorders Lancelot's priorities. Lancelot's

reluctance to go against his own personal principles, to do something “which ys sore ayensete [his] harte,” gives way to what the king perceives as Lancelot’s public responsibility to uphold the fellowship of the Round Table. Eventually Lancelot does as he has been told. And Malory reports that since Lancelot does indeed heal Urry and his honor is saved, he “wepte as a betyn child” (1152).

In these scenes, Arthur displays or exercises a control over knowledge that surpasses that of other men. And even Lancelot, who prior to this scene has masterfully interpreted events to his advantage, must on this occasion acknowledge Arthur’s authority. Yet despite the fact that Lancelot weeps as if he were “a betyn child,” he continues to love the queen as he had before; hence, he continues in his disobedience, his treason to the king. Malory, however, reworks this scene, namely, the issues regarding king and subject, in the closing pages of the *Morte Darthur*, and these reworkings help us to see that Malory’s text does not dispossess Arthur of his ability to command obedience but rather augments his authority to do so.

Consider, for instance, the famous scene between Bedivere and Arthur that occurs near the end of the book. The king orders Bedivere to throw Excalibur into the water, and though he promises to do so, Bedivere follows his own judgment and hides the sword under a tree. When he returns to Arthur, he reports that he has indeed done what the king has told him to do. But Arthur immediately detects the lie and admonishes Bedivere: “That ys untruly seyde of the” (1239). Once again Bedivere promises to do as he has been told, but he does not. When the king hears the second lie, Arthur accuses Bedivere of treason: “A, traytour unto me and untrew . . . now hast thou betrayed me twyse! Who wolde wene that thou that has bene to me so leve and dere, and also named so noble a knyght, that thou wolde betray me for the ryches of thys swerde?” (1239). The terms of Arthur’s accusation against Bedivere evoke the theme of ingratitude found in both York’s attainder and Malory’s complaint against Englishmen. Here Arthur recalls for Bedivere the love and honor that he, the king, has bestowed on him. But, in this passage the recollection of the king’s past generosity is effective. Bedivere rectifies his disobedience and does as the king wishes. Further, Arthur discloses a capacity to detect a lie when it is spoken. That is, while Bedivere professes obedience, the king labels his words as false and treasonous. Similar to the capacity of the law to see into the hearts and minds of people convicted of imagining the death of the king,

Arthur sees through Bedivere's words to know what he has done. Rather than having an act of law speak or prosecute treason on behalf of the king, the *Morte Darthur* permits the king's words to transform a disobedient subject into an obedient one.

Although Arthur physically disappears from the realm shortly after this incident, his authority gathers in strength, effecting a similar obedience in other subjects, most notably, in the strongest knight of the realm, Lancelot. It is true that Lancelot has never openly challenged the king's authority, but he has, nevertheless, secretly substituted himself for the king in Guinevere's bed. Against the charge of treason that is finally brought against him by Agravain, Lancelot proclaims his innocence and, as I have noted above, cites the great deeds he has accomplished on behalf of the king and others. Yet after receiving and carrying out the instructions for Guinevere's burial, Lancelot no longer attempts to justify himself. Overcome with grief after burying Guinevere alongside Arthur, Lancelot is reprimanded for showing such emotion. He replies:

... my sorow was not, nor is not, for ony rejoysyng of synne, but my sorow may never have ende. . . . whan I remembre me how my defaute and myn orgule and my pryde that they were bothe layed ful lowe, that were pereles that ever was lyvyng of Cristen people, wyt you wel . . . this remembred, of their kyndenes and myn unkyndenes, sanke so to myn herte that I myght not susteyne myself. (1256)

This scene maybe seen as a re-enactment of the "Sir Urry" episode with one significant difference. Lancelot's private grief in the earlier scene has now become public, and, accordingly, for the first time he acknowledges any wrongdoing on his part.

It is the king who, though not present in his natural body, reclaims his property. His queen is returned to him, and he exacts repentance and obedience from an ungrateful subject. Moreover, this exaction comes in the form of remembrance and self-recrimination. Lancelot's confession amounts to a rereading of his past, one that now conforms to Arthur's stated opinion that he, the king, has not deserved such treatment from Lancelot, and it also conforms to the view of the past as it is stated in Malory's criticism of the "Englysshmen" who speak "eyvll" of King Arthur. Lancelot now remembers that he has returned ingratitude for generosity, "unkyndenes" for "kyndenes."

Lancelot's act of remembrance echoes two earlier confessions: one made by Guinevere and the other made by Gawain. When Lancelot

finds Guinevere in a convent, he suggests to her that she should return to France with him. But she refuses. As she tells the other nuns: "Thorow thys same man and me hath all thys warre be wroughte . . . for thorow oure love that we have loved togydir ys my moste noble lorde slayne" (1252). Guinevere's rejection of Lancelot's plan expresses a sense of guilt and responsibility for having brought war and death to her "noble lorde." In like manner, Gawain before he dies places himself completely in the service of the king, confessing the injury he has caused Arthur through his relentless, vengeful pursuit of Lancelot: "Thorow me and my pryde ye have al thys shame and disease. . . ." (1230).

Not one of these confessions has a precedent in Malory's sources. And all three confessions as well as Bedivere's compliance to Arthur's wishes produce a common memory of the past, specifically, of a generous king whose ungrateful subjects have abandoned the one to whom they owe everything. When set against narratives of attainder or judgments in cases of treasonous speech, Malory's orchestration of these statements produces a very different result. Instead of having an act of law record a subject's ingratitude to his king, Malory's Lancelot, Guinevere, and Gawain judge themselves guilty of failing to serve Arthur as they should have: They speak of their treason against his virtue.⁴⁴ Malory's *Morte Darthur*, therefore, negotiates a radical shift from narratives of attainder. For instance, in the attainder of the duke of York, the law speaks on behalf of the king by criticizing the duke for the ingratitude he has shown to his king and, accordingly, it imposes punishment on him. But in Malory, it is the king's subjects who criticize themselves and judge themselves to be deserving of punishment. These subjects, therefore, enact a type of attainder against themselves.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Not unlike Freud's father in *Totem and Taboo*, Malory's Arthur appears more powerful in death than in life. See *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed., and trans. James Strachey, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1953–74), 13. See also *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans., James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1977), 81–92 and Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (1994, Oxford: Blackwell, rpt., 1997), 454–455, 493–494.

⁴⁵ For a further discussion of the attainder-like treatment of Lancelot in the *Morte Darthur*, see my "Lancelot's Vocation: Traitor Saint," in *The Lancelot-Grail Cycle: Text and Transformation*, ed. William Kibler (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), 219–237.

With Lancelot, Guinevere, and Gawain speaking against themselves through words that basically repeat those used earlier by Arthur and by Malory in his complaint against Englishmen, the voice of the king or a voice who speaks on his behalf asserts and effects his authority. Malory, of course, could have chosen a very different ending for his romance, one that did not require these prominent subjects to speak words of self-recrimination. For instance, he could have adopted a strategy like York's and have Lancelot successfully reverse the charge of treason against him. Lancelot does indeed resist the name of traitor for a very long time. He charges, as we have seen, that Arthur has listened to liars, and he recites the deeds he has done on Arthur's behalf. But neither his reproachment of the king nor his appeal to meritorious deeds frees him from the charge of treason. On the contrary, Lancelot's confession reveals an important transformation in this once most powerful knight of the realm. Transformed from a knight who earlier in his career could easily be seen as a law unto himself, Lancelot is now subject to the king's authority. By the end of Malory's text, therefore, Lancelot has learned a new language, the language of self-abasement, of self-criticism. The *Morte Darthur*, in effect, censors Lancelot, determining what he as the king's subject can and cannot say.

The alterations in Lancelot's body near the time of his death also iterate this narrative of self-censure and the transformation it heralds. Malory tells us that Lancelot refuses to eat or drink, and as a result he shrinks a cubit in length. His physical appearance is so greatly altered that the "peple could not know him" (1257). Weeping and "groveling" at the tomb of Arthur and Guinevere, his prostrate and shrunken body bears witness to his subjection, that is, to a history, that, like attainder, constitutes and preserves a subject's ingratitude to his king and demands retribution for it.⁴⁶ But here it is the traitor's own body and not the law that attests to this history. Hence, rather than having a king die from grief, as fifteenth-century prosecutions of treasonous speech imagined, the *Morte Darthur* imagines a subject, a declared traitor, who utters words of ingratitude or attainder against himself with the result that he dies from the sorrow of having caused injury to his king. From this perspective, the *Morte*

⁴⁶ See Butler's remarks on one possible connection between injurious words and the body, 152.

Darthur regulates the “domain of the sayable” to produce subjects who repent of their disloyalty. The prohibition against imagining the death of the king, therefore, achieves an idealized fulfillment in Malory’s text. Internalizing the voice of a virtuous king as a standard by which they judge themselves guilty, once disobedient subjects now attain or injure themselves as they now speak of the king’s authority and their subjection to it.

WELCOME TO THE PARISH. REMOVE YOUR CAP AND
STOP ASSAULTING YOUR NEIGHBOR

Daniel Thiery

One Sunday in September of 1454 in the pastoral calm of Yorkshire, Laurence Caterall was listening quietly to divine service when an armed gang led by Thomas Percy charged into the church and headed straight for him. Catalyzed by fear, Caterall scrambled through the house of God, past the vicar and into a vestibule near the altar. Percy and his servants, shouting threats and brandishing swords all the while, pursued their prey into the chancel and then leapt upon the altar to corner him. The vicar was more than a bit disturbed, as he stared at the feet of the alleged “*inimici Christi*” and over the head of the cowering Caterall. Fearing further sacrilege and for his own safety, he immediately ceased the mass, picked up the host in his hand, and commanded all before him in the name of God to forsake their wicked ways. Without further threat or violence, Percy climbed off the altar, led Caterall out of the church and carried him off to confinement in Cockermouth, Cumberland.¹

In a rather different case, on a Sunday in Herefordshire in 1457, Roger Vaughn and John ap Harry came armed into a parish church and began to threaten some local jurors who were there listening to the mass. As their threats grew more intense, Walter Grace, the vicar of the church, halted his prayers and commanded the two agitators to cease their belligerence out of reverence for the holy space of the church, God’s name and Christ’s body. Undeterred and angered by Walter’s plea for restraint, Roger and John began to push and strike the vicar until finally he started to bleed. As each drop of blood desecrated the church, the two aggressors hastily tried to avoid the consequences of their violence by forcing the battered and bleeding Grace to continue the mass before the now stunned and offended parishioners.²

¹ Public Records Office (London) [hereafter PRO], KB 9/149/34.

² PRO KB 9/35/60.

Although these two anecdotes from the records of the court of King's Bench certainly differ in their degree of blood shed, both depict the influence of religion on aggressive behavior. While Percy and Caterall displayed their reverence for the host by refraining from further violence in the church, Vaughn and John tried to maintain the sacred status of the polluted church, or at least to diminish the effects of their having shed blood in it, by forcing the vicar to say the mass. In both instances, the perpetrators of aggression attempted to negotiate the tension between religious and secular ideas about the legitimacy of violence.

In late medieval England, two worlds with their own conventions and norms struggled to govern individual behavior. On the one hand, the secular world was one in which violence was part of the fabric of normative social relations. Quotidian behavior was guided by an honor-code which legitimized the employment of both physical and verbal violence to defend one's status. Moreover, the power of viliagers to arrest criminals, the right of elite individuals to enforce the accepted class hierarchy and the duty of servants to their masters sanctioned violence on an individual basis.

On the other hand, the Church for the most part proscribed violence and aggression among its adherents as sinful and an impious contamination of the sacred. In lieu of the developed but not always effective judicial system, the clergy provided highly important methods for controlling socially acceptable but spiritually detrimental violence. Through remonstrance, ritual and rules, the Church clearly tried to curb violence in the daily lives of parishioners even if its best efforts were sometimes undermined either by its own doctrines advocating aggression or by lay society's continued sanction of violence as an honourable means of dispute-resolution. Indeed, ecclesiastical and secular court rolls reveal that, despite the clergy's efforts, acts of physical and verbal aggression involving sacred persons, spaces or rituals were not completely foreign to parish life. Rather than discarding these cases as manifestations of society's indifference to religion, one should carefully examine them for examples of how the laity negotiated sacred and secular behavioral norms. With this point in mind, the following study will explore how the clergy endeavored to delegitimize violence through the establishment of sacred space and through the cultivation of reverence for the Eucharist. It will then examine several court cases to assess the social impact of such clerical efforts.

Scholars have always shown interest in the interaction of religion and violence in terms of chivalry, military conduct and just war because such interaction is noticeably linked with political history and the destiny of many a lord and monarch.³ Only recently have historians, following the pioneering concerns of John Bossy, attempted to illuminate clerical methods of conflict-resolution at the parish level.⁴ Other scholars have bravely struggled to disentangle the complex cultural web which fashioned parishioners' understanding of violence and how such understanding related to their faith.⁵ Nevertheless, these studies, still too scarce in number, require significant supplementation and synthesis in order to provide a broader perspective on the various methods by which the clergy endeavored to curb violence among parishioners.

³ Scholars of Iceland, France and the Mediterranean region have been far ahead of historians of England in terms of studies concerning the role of violence in social cohesion and decay and the use of anthropology to understand violence in history. See, for instance, the studies of Natalie Zemon Davis and Robert Muchembled for France, Mark D. Meyerson and David Nirenberg for Spain, and Thomas and Elizabeth Cohen, Guido Ruggiero, Robert Davis and Edward Muir for Italy. For a general examination of the role of violence in society, see William Ian Miller, *Humiliation* (Ithaca, 1993). Richard Kaeuper has recently added some interesting points about the clergy and their relationship to the violence of chivalry in *Violence and Chivalry* (Oxford, 1999). Paul Hyams has also discussed clerical control of violence in early medieval England in lectures based on his forthcoming publication, *Rancour and Reconciliation*.

⁴ See: R. B. Dobson, "Politics and the Church in the Fifteenth-Century North," in *The North of England in the Age of Richard III*, ed. A. J. Pollard (New York, 1996), pp. 1-18; B. Hanawalt, *Of Good and Ill Repute: Gender and Social Control in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 35-53; M. E. James, *English Politics and the Concepts of Honour: Past and Present Supplement no. 3* (1978); P. Hyams, "Feud in Medieval England," *Haskins Society Journal* 3 (1991): 17-20; B. Kumin, "Parishioners in Court Litigation and the Local Community, 1350-1650" in *Belief and Practice in Reformation England*, ed. S. Wabuga and C. Litzenberger (Brookfield, 1998), pp. 20-39.

⁵ Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1989); "The Mass as Social Institution," *Past and Present* (1983): 48-61; "Blood and Baptism: Kinship, Community and Christianity in Western Europe from the Fourteenth to the Seventeenth centuries," *Studies in Church History* (1973): 129-143; M. E. James, *English Politics*; P. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order in East Anglia, 1422-1442* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 75-110. K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (Oxford, 1997); R. Muchembled, *La Violence au village: sociabilité et comportements populaires en Artois du XV^e au XVII^e siècle* (Brussels, 1989); N. Z. Davis, "The Rites of Violence in Society and Culture in Early Modern France," in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, 1975), pp. 152-188; For an investigation of the link between religion, honor and violence among Jews and *conversos* in late medieval Valencia, see M. Meyerson, "The Murder of Pau de Sant Martí: Jews, Conversos, and the Feud in Fifteenth-Century Valencia," in *A Great Effusion of Blood?: Interpreting Medieval Violence*, ed. D. Thiery, M. Meyerson and O. Falk (Toronto, publication pending).

The studies of Bossy still provide the most detailed investigation of the relationship between secular and religious concepts of aggression. Bossy intimates that the motives for violence and religious observance in late medieval England were not always the inverse of each other but rather, in particular ritual moments, religion subsumed aggressive impulses and redirected them peacefully toward the divine.⁶ While Bossy's ideas have inspired my own studies and furthered my understanding of the role of ritual in late medieval society, his arguments are largely based on didactic or liturgical texts. This has two limitations. First, these sources largely present a clerical view of society, with the result that Bossy's studies overemphasize the impact of religion on social conflict. Second, by virtue of his reliance upon instructional and liturgical texts, Bossy's depiction of religion's ability to dissipate aggression remains largely idealistic and theoretical. By exploring the relationship between secular and religious ideas about violence through the court records, we can illuminate at a more practical level the gradual impact of religious teachings on social behavior.

In contrast to theories of just war or crusade, which offered a religious justification for particular forms of violence, the clergy's establishment of sacred space entailed an outright prohibition of aggression. Like their counterparts in non-Christian societies such as the 'man of the earth' among the Nuer in Africa or the Muslim *faqih* in late medieval Valencia, Christian clergy used ritual to establish sanctuaries of peace in the midst of social conflict.⁷ The Church further

⁶ John Bossy, "The Mass as Social Institution," 29–61. For list of Bossy's studies see n. 5.

⁷ Anthropology has some very important contributions to historians' understanding of the role of ritual and religion in the settlement of social conflict: see M. Gluckman, *Custom and Conflict in Africa* (Oxford, 1966), and *Essays on Ritual and Social Relations* (Manchester, 1964). Other anthropologists have explored in detail the role of 'holy men' as mediators: see J. B. Michaud, *Cohesive Force: Feud in the Mediterranean and the Middle East* (New York, 1975); E. Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London, 1969); R. Jamous, *Honneur et Baraka: Les Structures sociales traditionnelles dans le Rif* (Cambridge, 1981). For an anthropology influenced study of the role of Muslim clerics in fifteenth century Valencia see, M. Meyerson, *The Muslims of Valencia in the Age of Fernando and Isabel: Between Coexistence and Crusade* (Berkeley, 1991) and unpublished "Clerical Violence in Late Medieval Valencia"; Natalie Davis provides some insightful notes on the uses of anthropological, symbolic analysis of liturgy and other forms of worship in order to reveal the underlying social relationships and core societal beliefs in "Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion," in *The Pursuit of*

associated sacred space with physical restraint through laws and letters which denied the legitimacy of violence within God's hallowed halls or fields. By ritual and law, churches were fashioned into other-worldly havens which removed parishioners from contemporary norms of violence and presented them with a new perspective on social relations—one in which violence was shameful and charity was honorable.

The bishop or his appointee defined sacred space through public rites of consecration involving the liberal sprinkling of holy water, solemn processions, burial of relics, recitation of prayers and lastly, a mass.⁸ These rites transformed the mundane structure of the church into a sacred place, wholly imbued with the divine and more spiritually potent than any other ecclesiastical space.⁹ The dedication was a public affair and parishioners were encouraged to witness the process in order to take part in its blessings.¹⁰ In this way, the Church sought to educate the lay community about the distinctiveness of sacred space. While there is significant scholarship on the legal development of sanctuary and its prohibitions of violence,¹¹ in general,

Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion, ed. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden, 1974), pp. 307–338; “The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon”, *Past and Present* 90 (1981): 40–70; and “The Rites of Violence in Society and Culture in Early Modern France,” in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, 1975), pp. 152–188.

⁸ W. Durandus, *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments*, ed. and trans. J. M. Neale and B. Webb (New York, 1973), pp. 116–122; D. Davies, “Christianity,” in *Sacred Place*, ed. J. Holm (London, 1994), p. 43. For the analysis of the dedication process I will be using primarily two texts which detail the ceremony according to the official Roman Pontifical, *Ritus Solemnis pro Dedicatione Ecclesiae et consecratione sive unius sive plurium altarium* (New York, 1890), *Pontificale Romanum: editio princeps 1595–1596*, ed. M. Sodi and A. M. Triacca (Vatican City, 1997) and to glimpse the ‘local flavour’ of the dedication and reconciliation processes, we will refer to the Pontifical of Edmund Lacy, bishop of Exeter from 1420 to 1455; *Liber Pontificalis of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter*, ed. R. Barnes (Exeter, 1847), pp. 11–18, 46–53. I will also refer on occasion to the works found in E. Martene, *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus Libri* (Antwerp, 1736), 2: 668–789 and *The Pontifical of Magdalen College*, ed. H.A. Wilson (London, 1910), pp. 98–124.

⁹ Durandus, *Symbolism*, pp. 101–102.

¹⁰ Durandus, *Symbolism*, pp. 114–115. Durandus specifically notes when the “people” saw miracles during the dedication and when the “people” should follow the clerical procession.

¹¹ The studies of sanctuary and immunity usually are oriented toward a legal history perspective rather than a cultural/anthropological perspective but nonetheless, these studies offer very significant information on the ingrained understanding of sanctuary which began in Antiquity and became more and more explicit in the Middle Ages. See: B. Rosenwein, *Negotiating Space: Power, Restraint and the Privileges of*

historians have overlooked the details of the dedication rite. By investigating the ritual process, we can glimpse more clearly into clerical concerns about violence and how such concerns were conveyed to attendant parishioners.

The dedication ritual created an area that was liberated from all violence, both human and divine. At the beginning of the rite in the widely used Roman Pontifical, the Seven Penitential Psalms manifest the clergy's efforts to exclude the church from divine wrath. The bishop and clerics begged God in the very first Psalm, "Lord do not rebuke me in your fury and do not attack me in your wrath/ Have mercy on me Lord for I am weak" and they repeated the first half of this quotation again in their later recitation of Psalm 37.¹² In the Pontifical of Edmund Lacy, bishop of Exeter, the ritual does not include the Seven Penitential Psalms but it still commences with a recitation of Psalm 85 which appeals to God's infinite mercy and begs Him to hear their prayers.¹³ This clerical conception of churches as sanctuaries from divine wrath is also reflected in secular laws such as the late thirteenth-century royal statute against markets on church ground. This law strongly asserted that the true purpose of churches was to appease God's wrath by providing a place for prayer, liturgy and supplication.¹⁴ Such laws and prayers highlight the late medieval perception of God as a paragon of righteous violence, a source of justice and order rather than a font of unconditional love. The ritual of dedication assuaged this menacing deity and fashioned a haven from his righteous wrath.

In order to prevent mortal violence, the ritual emphasized the religious ideal of charity and God's exclusive right to wreak vengeance. First, through prayers and ritual action, the church was made a dis-

Immunity in Early Medieval Europe (Ithaca, 1999), pp. 27–41; Pierre Timbal Duclaux, *Le Droit d'Asile* (Paris, 1939).

¹² *Ritus Solemnis*, pp. 3–4; *Pontificale*, p. 304. *Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me, neque in ira tua corripas me./ Miserere mei Domine quoniam infirmus sum.*

¹³ *Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 12. *Inclina, Domine, auram tuam et exaudi me./ Quoniam inops et pauper sum ego. / . . . Quoniam tu suavis et mitis, / Et multae misericordiae omnibus invocantibus te.*

¹⁴ E. Gibson, *Codex Iuris Ecclesiastici Anglicani* (Oxford, 1861), p. 191. 52 Henry III (1268): *Omnipotens Dominus, qui cum propter peccata nostra irascitur, non obliviscitur misereri, sciens se posse ac debere placari per contritorum, et humiliorum gemitus et orationes, Templata et Oratoria construi voluit, in quibus convenientes fideles abstracta a cunctis exterioribus actibus et seipso, clausis corporis sensibus, in suis conscientiis, per Oblationes et Hostias et praecipue per Sacrificia contriti cordis et Orationes . . . iram iusti Iudicis mitigarent . . .*

tinct center of peace and charity, the ideal religious counterpoint to violence. After ritually cleansing the exterior walls and main entrance of the church with a threefold sprinkling of holy water, the bishop entered into the church and clearly linked the newly established sacredness of the area with nonviolence through his first words; "Peace be to this house."¹⁵ The choir then responded with prayers for peace. In early versions of the ritual, they sang, "Peace be to this House, and to all that are in it: Peace to those who come in and those who go out."¹⁶ Bishop Lacy chanted, "Peace be to this house," and the choir responded, "May eternal peace come from the Eternal Father to this house: Pious comforter let peace be in this house."¹⁷ In the later official versions, the choir cried out for peace within the hallowed space; "Let eternal peace be to this house from the Eternal One. Word of the Father, may heavenly, lasting peace be to this house. Pious comforter let peace be in this house."¹⁸ Almost immediately after this invocation of peace, the bishop prayed for the Holy Spirit, the "fons vivus, ignis" and "caritatis," to fill the audience's hearts with love.¹⁹ Later, after exorcising the entire inside of the church through ritual cleansing and prayers, the bishop implored God to "let peace be in abundance to those who come to Your church."²⁰ These prayers molded churches into sources and centers of peace in which parishioners, ideally, set aside their wrath, denied the legitimacy of violence and embraced charity.

The sacred space of the church was not just linked with vague notions of peace but also intimately aligned with the cardinal virtue of charity. The modern notion of charity as the giving of alms comprised only a minute part of the medieval notion. The medieval understanding of charity was more in accord with modern notions of platonic love. It entailed concord with, if not sincere love of, all

¹⁵ Martene, *Antiquis*, 2: 688, 711–712; *Magdelene College*, p. 103; *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 19; *Pontificale*, p. 313.

¹⁶ Martene, *Antiquis*, 2: 688, 711–712; *Pax huic domui, et omnibus habitantibus in ea, pax ingredientibus et regredientibus alleluja*.

¹⁷ *Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 17.

¹⁸ *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 19; *Pontificale*, p. 313; *Pax aeterna ab Aeterno huic domui. Pax perennis, Verbum Patris, sit pax huic domui. Pacem pius Consolator huic praestet domui*.

¹⁹ *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 20; *Pontificale*, p. 316; *Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 17.

²⁰ *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 36; *Pontificale*, p. 326; *ac per multitudinem propitiationis tuae visitoribus domus sit pax cum abundantia*; Lacy has a similar prayer before the entrance into the church, see: *Pontificalis of Lacy*, pp. 16–17.

parishioners and the absence of envy, wrath and spite. As he circled the church and cleansed it of vice, the bishop petitioned God aloud “to give his servants . . . the unbreakable bonds of charity.”²¹ This prayer evinces the most dominant theme of the clergy’s day to day assault against aggression—charity as an alternative means of association and community. Aggression does not always corrode social relationships and foster destructive social competition; rather, it often strengthens or affirms group cohesion and association.²² However, for the clergy, charity could establish and affirm social bonds without violence or ‘cohesive force’ ever being required. Temporal violence was unnecessary because charity was the virtue which deflected God’s wrath and charity was the angel which would defend the attendant faithful against their enemies.²³ This association between the peacefulness of the faithful and the protective violence of God would resound even louder in other sections of the dedication ritual.

As the latter statement and the previous discussion of God’s wrath suggest, violent language was not excluded from the formation of a sacred site; instead, it was embraced as a reminder that violent agency belonged to God alone. As the singing of the Antiphon in the later stages of the ceremony asserted, God is the most powerful one who girds his sword at his side, fires sharp arrows and slays his enemies.²⁴ Numerous prayers throughout the ritual contended that this supreme warrior would provide justice to those who clung to charity instead of revenge.²⁵ In Psalm 50 of the Seven Penitential Psalms, the corruption of temporal bloodshed was deplored while the protective power of God was implored; “God, you the God of my safety, free me from bloodshed and my tongue will praise your justice.”²⁶ Other

²¹ *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 17; *Pontificale*, p. 310; *Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 16: *da famulis tuis per haec nostrae devotionis officia indissolubile vinculum caritatis.*

²² See n. 7.

²³ *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 37; In Psalm 37 of the initial seven penitential Psalms: *Non est sanitas in carne mea a facie irae tuae: non est pax ossibus meis a facie peccatorum meorum.* Later the bishop asks that an angel of charity may come to defend them against their foes, p. 37: *mereamur habere nobiscum Angelum pacis, castitatis et caritatis, ac veritatis, qui semper ab omnibus malis nos custodiat, protegat et defendat.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65; *Accingere gladio tuo super femur tuum, potentissime . . . Sagittae tuae acutae, populi sub te cadent, in corda inimicorum regis.*

²⁵ For early espousals of the same idea see Martene, *Antiquis*, 2: 712; *Magdalene*, p. 109; *Ritus Solemnis*, pp. 5–6, 8–9, 14, 37, 40, 62–63.

²⁶ *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 6. This same Psalm is repeated later in the ritual, p. 40. *Libera me de sanguinibus Deus, Deus salutis meae: et exultabit lingua mea iustitiam tuam*

prayers assured that God, like the newly sanctified church, would protect the devout, save them from the blows of their enemies and even take vengeance for them.²⁷ Once he had exorcised the interior of the church with holy water, the bishop prayed that the newly cleansed space would be free from all evil and immune from all attacks.²⁸ Near the end of the ritual, another Psalm conveyed the message that only the “foolish” would plot against and attack the faithful, for God would destroy him.²⁹ When examined as a whole, these prayers contended that God was the supreme *armigerus* who barred the unrestrained and malicious from entrance into the church.

The clergy’s insistence on God’s sole right to violence intriguingly parallels the developing notion in the secular world that violent agency was the monarch’s exclusive right. In pursuit of salvation and social order, the Church and monarchy attempted to place the right of violent agency beyond the reach of most individuals. Acts of interpersonal aggression that popular mores condoned were increasingly villified by clerical and royal authorities. In the monarch’s case, individual aggression was criminalized, while in the Church’s case, individual violence was demonized.

One final aspect of the dedication ritual helped to separate the space of the church from violence. The threefold cleansing of the outside and inside of the church with holy water and a hyssop branch was an act of exorcism intended to rid the space of evil spirits. While violence can be regarded as the natural product of social relations, the clergy saw aggression as an invasive force.³⁰ Violence and discord were actual entities which could be driven from the hearts and

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9, 14, 37, 62–63; *Pontificalis of Lacy*, pp. 13, 15, 17. Lacy’s ritual has a particularly specific petition for protection within the confines of the church: *Exaudi nos, Domine Sancte, pater omnipotens, eterne Deus et mittere digneris sanctum angelum tuum de celis, qui custodiat, foveat, protegat, visitet et defendat omnes inhabitantes in hoc habitaculo.*

²⁸ *Ritus Solemnis*, p. 14; *ut salubritas per invocationem sancti tui nominis expetita, ab omnibus sit impugnationibus defensa.* Lacy’s ritual has a similar prayer: *ut quicquid ex eo tactum vel apersum fuerit, careat omni immundicia, omnique impugnatione sit defensa spiritualis nequicie;* *Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 13. We must remember that even when the text discusses evil spirits, the notion that evil works through human agency was accepted at the time and therefore, not only the violence of wicked spirits but also human violence is being repelled in this prayer.

²⁹ *Ritus Solemnis*, pp. 62–63. *Vir insipiens non cognoscet: et stultus non intelliget haec . . . Quoniam ecce inimici tui Domine, quoniam ecce inimici tui peribunt: et dispergentur omnes, qui operantur iniquitatem. . . . Et despexit oculus meus inimicos meos; et insurgentibus in me malignantibus audiet auris mea./Justus, ut palma florebit . . .*

³⁰ See n. 7.

even physical spaces of the faithful. The exorcism freed the church from demonic influence, including the demons who personified wrath and envy along with their favorite weapons of physical and verbal violence.³¹ In short, the witnesses of the consecration ceremony would be well aware that unlike the corrupt church in *Piers Plowman*, Wrath was no longer welcome to sit in the middle of the pew amongst the gossiping crowd.³²

Through consecration, the clergy separated the sacred from the secular world and created a space where normally licit violence became corrupt. By stressing the ideal of charity and God's exclusive right to enact violence, the dedication ritual classified all temporal aggression as sinful and a usurpation of God's rights. The space of the church was thoroughly different from the temporal world and its norms of behavior, as the choir sang, "O, how this place should be feared: Truly this place is nothing other than the House of God and the gate of heaven."³³ Nevertheless, this nascent message did not always prevent drops of blood from desecrating the same ground that had been made sacred by drops of holy water.

According to both Biblical tradition and canon law, the shedding of blood in churches or cemeteries 'polluted' their sacredness and made them merely mundane. Biblically, the Church still respected and cited Leviticus 14 and 15 which forbade the bleeding or blood-stained from entering the Temple.³⁴ The *Decretum* of Gratian, as well as later synodal statutes and clerical treatises, required that a bishop, or his appointee, expeditiously rededicate any church which had been defiled by blood. Neglect placed parishioners' souls in jeopardy since all sacraments and burials were to be suspended until the reconciliation had been performed.³⁵

³¹ For exorcism prayers see: *Ritus Sollemnis*, pp. 29–31; *Pontificalis of Lacy*, pp. 13–16. For studies of beliefs concerning spirits see: K. Thomas, *Religion*; R. Scribner, "The Reformation, Popular Magic and the Disenchantment of the World," in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23:3 (1993): 475–494 and "Popular Piety, and Modes of Visual Perception in Late Medieval and Reformation Germany," *Journal of Religious History* 14 (1989): 448–469; E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven, 1993), pp. 136, 268–269.

³² W. Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, ed. H. Wells (New York, 1945), pp. 277–280. The character Wrath says, "I am wont to worship with wives and widows, Imparked in pews."

³³ *Ritus Sollemnis*, p. 42; *Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 18: *O quam metuendus este locus iste: vere non est hic aliud nisi domus Dei, et porta coeli.*

³⁴ See for instance Durandus, *Symbolism*, pp. 132–135.

³⁵ Gratian, *Decretum* ed. G. Merlin, G. Nesbois and S. Nivellium (Paris, 1561),

Late medieval episcopal registers show that acts of violence involving the sacred were not infrequent and that bishops stood ready to counter the sacrilegious and disruptive force of bloodshed in churches through the reconciliation ritual.³⁶ Upon notice of a potentially polluted church or cemetery, the bishop sent an investigative commission to determine whether rededication was truly required. One of the most conscientious bishops, or simply the most troubled, was Edmund Lacy, bishop of Exeter (1420–1455). In 1426, Lacy issued four different commissions which inquired into the alleged pollution of churches by bloodshed from brawls.³⁷ The efficiency of Lacy's inquiries can be seen in the commission issued on 23, November, 1426, which licensed the archdeacon of Exeter and master Henry Webber to inquire on oath whether the chapel of All Hallows at Hoynton was polluted by bloodshed, and whether William Faryngdon inflicted violence on Sir John Lyghtfote, chaplain. If the chapel was polluted, divine worship was to be suspended until the space had been reconciled. On 30, November, the commission declared that the chapel had not been polluted in any way by an effusion of blood from the brawl between Faryngon and Lyghtfote.³⁸

During the fifteenth century, other bishops were also compelled to reconcile churches within their diocese. In the register of John Stanbury, bishop of Hereford from 1453 to 1474, Geoffrey, bishop of Kildare, was commissioned to reconcile the churchyard of Titley which had been polluted by the bloodshed caused by John Rode of Staunton. Geoffrey was also given permission to give absolution to Rode once he had been formally punished by the ecclesiastical court.³⁹

pp. 1483–1488. Synodal Statutes also demanded reconciliation, see: *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church, A.D. 1205–1313*, ed. F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (Oxford, 1964), 2: 35–36, 93, 110, 135, 195, 230, 297, 444, 519.

³⁶ Staffordshire Record Office, Lichfield Registers B/C/2/1 m.117; *Registrum Iohannis Gilbert*, ed. J. H. Parry (London, 1915), pp. 68–69, 94; *Registrum Thome Spofford*, ed. T. Bannister (London, 1919), p. 177; *Registrum Iohannis Stanbury*, ed. A. T. Bannister (London, 1919), pp. 47, 70, 94, 97; *Registrum Edmund Lacy*, ed. G. R. Dunstan (Devon, 1863), 1: 29, 111, 157, 161, 191, 305; 2: 15, 62, 88, 108–110, 163, 198, 228, 266, 282, 305, 360, 374, 408; 3: 4, 21, 34, 38, 42, 56, 68, 155, 160, 203; *Registrum Roberti Hallum*, ed. J. M. Horn (Devon, 1982), pp. 96, 118.

³⁷ *Registrum Lacy*, 1: 29, 111, 157, 191.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1: 191; *per sanguinis effusionem inter dominum J. Lyghtfote capellanum et W. Faryngdon minime fuisse pollutam.*

³⁹ *Registrum Stanbury*, p. 40; *Johannes etc., venerabili in Christo . . . Quia, ut cortitudinaliter informamur, cimiterium ecclesie parochialis de Tytteley, nostre diocesis; per injurias am*

In this letter, Stanbury clearly wishes to condemn the sin while forgiving the sinner. By focusing on the deed rather than the person, Stanbury implicitly expresses again the clerical notion of violence as an entity, a demon, which could be driven out of the parish and parishioners. Less than three years later in 1461, Stanbury commissioned John Greenway to receive the purgation of Henry Ward and his son from the charge of pollution. The two perpetrators were charged with polluting the church through their, “*manus sacrilegas et violentes*.”⁴⁰ As if to make the offenders expressly aware of the bishop’s particular disdain for their sin, the letter emphasized that their hands were not simply violent but also sacrilegious. These letters manifest the clergy’s conception of violence as a disruptive force. Bloodshed created chaos in the spiritual world and only ritual could restore order.

Since most churches had been consecrated in centuries past, the majority of late medieval parishioners would not have witnessed the ritual of dedication and its prohibitions against aggression. Yet, as the bishops’ registers testify, a far greater percentage would have witnessed the process of reconciliation at some point in their adult lives. The ritual itself involved the sprinkling of water consecrated with salt, wine and ashes around the bounds of the church and especially in the areas which were defiled by blood. In tandem with this cleansing, the liturgy of the mass was integral to the church’s return to holiness. Like the dedication, the ritual process of reconciliation contained words and actions that conveyed the clergy’s concern with the eradication of violence within sacred space and the mitigation of violence among parishioners.⁴¹ Also, in a more distinct manner than the dedication, the reconsecration ritual elucidates clerical

sanguinis humani effusionem, per quemdam Johannem Rode . . . de parochia de Stauntone, in dicto cimiterio nuper factam et perpetrata, violatum et pollutum existat . . . ad reconciliandum igitur et reformandum dictum cimiterium, prefatumque Johannem Rode, coram vobis de stando mandatis ecclesie juratum, debite absolendum et penitentiam salutarem pro commissis suis huiusmodi injungendam . . .

⁴⁰ *Registrum Stanbury*, pp. 70–71; “sacrilegious and violent hands.”

⁴¹ For early examples of reconciliation rituals from between 500 and 900 A.D. see, Martene, *Antiquis*, 2: 793–802. The primary texts for the description of the reconciliation ceremony are: *Ritus Solemnis de Benedictione et Impositione Primarii Lapidis Pro Ecclesia Aedificanda, de Coemeterii Benedictione, de Ecclesiae et Coemeterii Reconciliatione, de Reconciliatione Coemeterii sine Ecclesiae Reconciliatione et de Benedictione Signi vel Campanae* (New York, 1892), pp. 48–72; *Pontificale*, 479–494; *Magdalene*, pp. 127–131 and *Pontificalis of Lacy*, pp. 46–53.

attempts to demonize temporal violence, their understanding of the contemporary world of honor and how God functions within such a system, and their continued effort to counter arguments for the legitimacy of violence.

The reconsecration contained many aspects found in the dedication ceremony. There were prayers for peace within the church space, prayers imploring God to free the attendant faithful from bloodshed, prayers invoking God as the defender of the devout, and an exorcism of demons who spread discord.⁴² With the exorcism, the clergy's demonization of violence again becomes visible. The Church, though sanctioning some forms of violence on its behalf, contended that most temporal violence was a product of the devil, a thoroughly sinful deed which had no merit in God's eyes. One prayer of the reconciliation ritual petitioned God that "if anything was polluted in this place through foul cunning with daily insults, may it be purged by heavenly compassion."⁴³ Bloodshed in church was a product of the devil's artifice and as such, no parishioner could claim that their aggression was justified by God or man.⁴⁴

The reconciliation ritual commenced within a barren setting which emphasized the absence of God from the church and the need for repentance: an altar stripped bare of all ornaments and candles, two vases of water, one of wine, one of salt and one of ashes placed in the church and one vase of water in the cemetery, if it was also in need of reconciliation.⁴⁵ The stark setting indicated that the parishioners had affronted God's honor by the pollution of His house, for as the dedication decreed and reconciliation reminded, violence was God's right alone and the church was to be free from all brutality.

⁴² *Reconciliatione*, pp. 49; the repetition of Psalm 50 just as in the dedication asks God to free them from bloodshed; 50, 55, 59, 60–61, 66, 71; *Pontificalis of Lacy*, pp. 47–53. Lacy's ritual does not include Psalm 50 but it does emphasize peace by repeating the ancient prayer, "*Pax huic domui et omnibus habitantibus in ea: pax ingredientibus et egredientibus*," p. 47.

⁴³ *Reconciliatione*, p. 60; *ut si quid virosa calliditate quotidianis insectationibus maculatum in isto loco corruptumque fuerat, efficiatur coelesti miseratione purgatum*. *Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 48, has similar prayers.

⁴⁴ As will be shown in my dissertation, an investigation of the language of court cases reveals that lay parishioners adopted this notion of demonic violence and incorporated it into the narrative framework of their conflicts.

⁴⁵ *Reconciliatione*, p. 48; *Pontifical of Lacy*, p. 46. Durandus asserts that the water symbolizes the parishioners, the wine, God, the ashes, Christ's passion, and the wine mixed with water, the union of Godhead and Manhood; Durandus, p. 131.

For both clerical and lay parishioners, the problem was apparent. Bloodshed in the church dishonored God and justified divine wrath. This assertion that the dishonor of God through violence could justly result in divine revenge was elaborated richly when the bishop with hands across his heart chanted aloud in latin:

Omnipotent Father and eternal God: You whose immense goodness, as it has no beginning, will also have no end. You who are filled with natural and divine piety, choose to rebuild in us what has been ruined rather than to strike us with damnation. And if either negligence has polluted, wrath committed, drunkenness incited, or lust subverted, you most pious Lord endure this with patience; so that you purify more through grace than you punish through rage. Providing for your work, you the molder, choose to build a place of relief than to punish those things which be damned. . . . You Lord, let all spiritual evil be gone and eliminated [from this place] in the future. . . . let the defect of the former contagion harm nothing here in the future, let there be nothing that would remain polluted by harmful offense, after it is purged by an infusion of your spirit.⁴⁶

Words such as *punire*, *percutias* and *furorem* reminded the parishioners of the violent power of God, a power that they should neither tempt nor usurp. Only supplication, purification and humble mortification would provide proper restoration and suspend God's impending revenge.⁴⁷

However, the clergy's message not only emphasized God's exclusive right to use violence but also that, in the end, God chose charity over justifiable vengeance. Implicitly, parishioners were encouraged to do the same lest they themselves reject the divine model of behavior. Once again the theme of 'charity instead of violence' appears

⁴⁶ *Ritus Solemnis Reconciliatione*, pp. 61–64; *Pontificalis Lacy*, pp. 50–51. *Pater omnipotens, aeternae Deus: Cuius immensa bonitas, ut non habuit principium, ita nec terminum habebit. Qui divina naturalique pietate plenus, eligis in nobis magis restituere perditā, quam percutere peritura. Et si quid aut negligentia polluit, aut ira committit, aut stimulat ebrietas, aut libido subvertit, hoc Domine clementi patientia sustines; ut ante gratiam purifices, quam percutias per furorem. Et operis tui providus plasmator eligis potius erigere jacentia, quam punire damnanda. Te Domine . . . absint in posterum omnes nequitiae spirituales, et eliminentur . . . nihil hic in posterum noceat praeteriti culpa contagii, nihil sit, quod remaneat inimici fraude pollutum, quandoquidem spiritus tui est infusione purgatum.*

⁴⁷ *Reconciliatione*, p. 57; *Deus, parce poenitentibus, propitiare supplicantibus, et mittere digneris sanctum Angelum tuum de coelis qui bene dicat, et sanctificet hos cineres, ut sint remedium salubre omnibus nomen sanctum tuum humiliter implorantibus, ac pro conscientia delictorum suorum accusantibus, ante conspectum divinae clementiae tuae facinora sua deplorantibus . . .*

as part of the clergy's efforts to alter parishioners' understanding of licit violence. Just as God had allowed the offensive church back into his grace, so too parishioners should respond charitably to conflict in their community and especially in sacred spaces.

The ritual of reconciliation ended with the celebration of the mass, the clergy's ultimate exposition of the ideal of charity. At the conclusion of the mass, the bishop prayed that "this temple and cemetery may remain by Your blessing pure and sanctified from the defilement of the unfaithful, and our hearts pure from all filth of vice."⁴⁸ With these closing words, the bishop reiterated to the attendant parishioners that their notions of proper behavior in the temporal world were not applicable to the sacred space of the church. Through ritual action and prayer, the laity were exposed to clerical ideas about the potency of the church as a place of peace, a charitable counterpoint to the violence and seemingly unfettered manifestations of rage in the secular world.

In his work *De Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, William Durandus discussed the symbolism of the reconciliation ceremony and emphasized that all parishioners should be present at the ritual in order that they may heed the clergy's admonition against the sin of aggression and sin in general.⁴⁹ This idea is also expressed in a letter found in the Register of John Stanbury, bishop of Hereford. On 31, July 1464, Stanbury ordered that Richard Bolion and Richard Neste, who had polluted a church through violence, must participate in the solemn processions of the public reconciliation.⁵⁰ In 1468, the bishop of Lincoln compelled Thomas Worthby, another violent desecrator, to attend the reconciliation of Grantham churchyard. The barefooted Worthby was to be struck by the priest with a rod during the procession and to offer a candle upon the altar during the

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 71; *ut templum hoc et coemeterium ab infidelium inquinamentis emundatum, benedictione tua maneat sanctificatum, et pectora nostra ab omni sorde vitiorum alienata. Pontificalis of Lacy*, p. 52; *ut templum hoc vel cimiterium barbarorum vel iniquorum inquinamentis emundatum tua benedictione maneat snactificatum, et pectora nostra ab omni sorde vitiorum alienata tibi devota semper assistant.*

⁴⁹ Durandus, *Symbolism*, p. 134. "For reconciliation is performed for an example and warning, that all who behold the church, which hath in no wise sinned, washed and purified for the delict of another, may reflect how they themselves must work out the expiation of their sins." Durandus' words show that the clergy wanted the attendant parishioners to question their own use of violence as they watched the reconciliation of a church defiled by bloodshed.

⁵⁰ *Registrum Stanbury*, pp. 97–98.

mass.⁵¹ Such rituals, in which both the offenders and other parishioners participated, distinctly articulated to society clerical ideas about the illegitimacy of violence in sacred spaces.

Another point at which parishioners would have been exposed to themes found in the dedication ritual and echoed in the reconciliation ritual was at the feast of the consecration of the church. Each year, a church which had been solemnly dedicated was entitled to celebrate the anniversary feast of its consecration. The celebration was very elaborate and involved the participation of all the priests who were attached to the church. A procession before the mass specifically accentuated that the church was a place of peace which ought to inspire reverential dread, not impudent action. The chorus sang in the opening line, "This is the house of God, a place of peace." They followed each verse of the procession with the response, "Dreadful is this place."⁵² Upon the commencement of the mass, the priest prayed, "Dreadful is this place, here is the house of God and the gate of heaven and it is called the hall of God."⁵³ After the first reading, the choir sang, "O how truly should this place be respected and feared for it is nothing other than the house of God and the gate of heaven."⁵⁴

The message of these Latin hymns was reiterated by vernacular sermons. In one prominent collection of late medieval sermons, the priest explained that the church was a place of prayer and sanctification. Devils were driven out, the guilty were delivered and the sick were made whole:

In it is the habitation of God, concourse of angels, reconciliation of man, and the lowenes of erthe is in it fellashpid to the hyenes of heuene. And this place is holy hous of God and gate of heuene. O Lord, what this place is gretely to be a-dredde! . . . And who-so-ever

⁵¹ *Lincoln Diocese Documents, 1450–1544*, ed. A. Clark, Early English Text Society no. 249 [hereafter EETS] (London, 1914), pp. 126–128.

⁵² *Sarum Missal*, ed. J. Wickham Legg (Oxford, 1916), p. 202; *Hec est aula dei pacis locus . . . Terribilis est locus iste*. For a symbolic analysis of the ceremony of the feast of the dedication see: William Durandus, *De Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, ed. A. Davril and T. M. Thibodeau, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievals no. 140B (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 127–130.

⁵³ *Sarum Missal*, p. 202; *Terribilis est locus iste hic domus dei est et porta celi et vocabitur aula dei*.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 203; *O quam metuendus et venerandus est locus iste vere non est hic aliud nisi domus dei et porta celi*.

fowleth that temple of God [speaking of the church itself and the human body] the lord God schall destroye hem.⁵⁵

The *Festial* of John Mirk, a very popular vernacular collection of sermons, emphasized that the church was hallowed for the cleansing of parishioners so that they might live in charity and peace. Mirk argued that “the chyrch ys a place ordeynet that cryston pepull schull come togedyr yn charyte, forto worschyp hor God yn rest and yn pees, ych on wyth othyr.” God would reside among the parishioners as long as they lived in peace. The devil hated parishioners who lived in charity and he would try anything to create dissension among them. For that reason, the clergy declared that the church should be hallowed so that the devil and his malice would be driven out of the church. Nevertheless, the devil could still come back when “a wykud lyuer” came into the church, for as long as a parishioner was out of charity “the fende [was] yn hym.”⁵⁶ Through ritual, prayer and sermon, the feast of the consecration lucidly noted the distinctiveness of the church as a place of peace and piety, an idyllic image which canon law and episcopal injunctions also sought to uphold.

Besides ritual, clerical statutes and episcopal commands reinforced the sacredness of the church and churchyard by delineating their boundaries and establishing punishments for violators. Numerous synodal statutes from the thirteenth century prohibited violence and bloodshed within sacred spaces. These statutes as well as canon law also sought to curb the bearing of arms within churches but their core message needed reiteration with each new generation of parishioners.⁵⁷ In July of 1430, the bishop of Durham wrote to the chaplain of Langchester concerning reports of parishioners carrying arms into the church and befouling it through their squabbles. The bishop explained that this behavior would no longer be tolerated for it offended the honor of the Church which was the “teacher of charity

⁵⁵ *Speculum Sacerdotale*, ed. E.H. Weatherly, EETS no. 200 (London, 1936), pp. 163–164.

⁵⁶ John Mirk, *Mirk's Festial*, ed. T. Erbe, EETS no. 96 (London, 1905), pp. 277–278.

⁵⁷ *Councils and Synods*, 2: 35–36, 93, 110, 135, 195, 230, 297, 444, 519; Gratian, *Decretum*, pp. 1483–1488; Gregory IX was also concerned with bloodshed in churches and trying to eliminate any association of churches with blood and aggression, see: *Decretales Gregorii IX*, ed. W. Merlin, W. Desbois and S. Nivellium (Paris, 1541), pp. 1531–1538.

and peace.”⁵⁸ Minor excommunication and public censure awaited all violators of the bishop’s command.

Though the clergy argued against violence in sacred spaces, it must be noted that they, and lay custom for that matter, muddled parishioners’ notion of sacred and secular space by the distribution of parochial maintenance, the emphasis on a hierarchy of sacred space, in which the nave was considered less sacred than the chancel and the chancel less holy than the sanctuary,⁵⁹ as well as the segregation of parish seating by gender and status. These divisions and distinctions inhibited the clergy’s efforts to create a uniform sense of sacred space, free from temporal aspirations and considerations.⁶⁰ By custom, law or ritual, the clergy endeavored to make sacred space an inviolable place of peace but due either to their own decrees and rituals or to their forbearance of parish customs, they could not completely separate sacred spaces from the contemporary world’s regard for status and reputation.

In essence, the clergy sought to protect churches from bloodshed in order to abide by the Old Testament tradition of individual purity and sanctuary within God’s temple. Durandus supports the Church’s proscription of pollution by quoting a lamentation from Psalm 89: “Thy Temple have they defiled and made Jerusalem a heap of stones.”⁶¹ From their earliest forms, the dedication and reconciliation rituals specifically purified and sanctified the altar so that it would be deemed worthy by God for the sacrifice of the mass.⁶² Yet, as the late medieval church increasingly defined itself in relation to

⁵⁸ *Depositions and Other Ecclesiastical Proceedings from the Courts of Durham*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society no. 21 (London, 1845), pp. 23–24.

⁵⁹ Durandus, *Symbolism*, pp. 24–25; Synodal statutes echoed this idea, see, *Councils and Synods*, 2: 297.

⁶⁰ The tendency of the laity to regard the nave as a less sacred space where violence was more acceptable may be seen in violent disputes over seating and even in some parishioners attempts to drag victims out of the chancel into the nave before assault. For examples of pew disputes see: PRO STAC 2/3/163–168, 2/10/135–136, 2/12/220, 2/17/208, 2/12/224–226, 2/24/149, 2/28/54. Also examine Margaret Aston’s analysis of the seating conflict between Lestrangle and Trussel in 1411 in, M. Aston, “Segregation in Church,” *Studies in Church History* 27 (1990): 266. For example of an aggressor trying to drag his victim into the nave, see PRO STAC 2/8/86–91.

⁶¹ Durandus, *Symbolism*, p. 133.

⁶² Martene, *Antiquis*, pp. 793–802; *Reconciliatio*, pp. 65–68; *Pontificalis of Lacy*, pp. 19–32.

the doctrine of transubstantiation, the prohibitions against violence garnered further justification. The spaces and ornaments associated with the very body of Christ had to be preserved from defilement lest the sacrifice of the mass lose its efficacy.

Like sacred space, the Eucharist was also linked with freedom from aggression. While at mass, parishioners were closer to the point where hostility “became impersonal and retired beyond the borders of community.”⁶³ As the recreation of Christ’s sacrifice for all humanity, the host challenged parishioners to abandon their worldly animosities and embrace the ideal of charity. Armed with a firm belief in transubstantiation, the clergy also stressed that church attendance should involve peaceful reverence and quiet contemplation in God’s presence. Finally, the increasingly ritualized acts of reverence for the host through such rituals as the *Corpus Christi* procession reminded parishioners of the dreadful power of God, a power which could punish irreverent violence just as quickly as it could reward passive devotion.

As Aquinas noted in his *Summa Theologiae* and the *Belleville Breviary* reinforced, each sacrament was linked to a virtue and the ritual of the Eucharist evoked the virtue of charity.⁶⁴ The host was charity in its most perfect form, and therefore parishioners were admonished to abandon all their aggressive impulses before the miracle of transubstantiation occurred at the sacring and before participation in communion. Since most parishioners did not communicate more than once year, the ritualized creation of the Eucharist assumed a more dynamic role than communion in their daily spiritual lives. The sacring, the ringing of bells and elevation of the host after the words, *hoc est enim corpus meum*, became the central moment of blessing for attendant parishioners.⁶⁵ The fervor of the laity for witnessing the sacring compelled some of them to dash from one part of their church to the other in hope of snatching a glimpse of the elevation at a side altar or at the high altar. Staggered masses rewarded such rushing to and fro as astute parishioners could witness several sacrings in one outing. Indeed, the Lollard preacher,

⁶³ J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West*, p. 69.

⁶⁴ M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 102.

⁶⁵ Duffy, *Stripping*, pp. 97–102.

William Thorpe, in spite of his radically mellifluous speech, could not deter his audience from rushing away when the sacring bell was wrung.⁶⁶ For these fleeing parishioners, the blessings bestowed upon those who saw the Eucharist far outweighed the benefits of hearing a good sermon.

However, footspeed was not the only requirement for observing the Eucharist. While the clergy warned that the desecration of the altar by bloodshed would cause God to reject the eucharistic sacrifice, they also admonished that mere thoughts of wrath would make parishioners unworthy of God's blessing.⁶⁷ Only those who embraced charity by both forgiving and seeking forgiveness from their neighbours were fit to observe the elevation. In a ritualized expression of this desire to pardon and be pardoned, the *pax* was passed through the church from one parishioner to the next.⁶⁸ The rhyming *Lay Folks Mass Book* taught its readers to recite this prayer for charity as the *pax* was passed:

Goddess lombe, that best may,
Do the synne of þis worlde away,
On vs thu haue mercy and pité,
And graunt vs pes and charité.⁶⁹

This display of *communitas* not only insured that the worshipers had looked worthily upon the sacring but also that those who did intend to communicate had set aside their malice and made peace with their brethren.⁷⁰

For the majority of parishioners who hastened to mass each Sunday, or perhaps for some each day, reception of communion was the most important aspect of late medieval spirituality and the pinnacle

⁶⁶ 'The Testimony of William Thorpe' in *Two Wycliffite Texts*, ed. A. Hudson, EETS no. 301 (London, 1993), p. 53.

⁶⁷ *Reconciliatione*, pp. 65–68.

⁶⁸ J. Bossy, 'The Mass as Social Institution,' 48–61.

⁶⁹ *Lay Folks Mass Book*, ed. T. F. Simmons, EETS no. 71 (London, 1879), pp. xxvii–xxviii, 49. The editor contends that later manuscripts of the work show that the scribes wished to shift the use of the book from just the devotions of upper class laity in their private chapels to the silent devotions of a more general audience in their parish churches. See also, Duffy, *Stripping*, pp. 118–119. I believe that the rhyming character of this text shows its intent to be read aloud on occasion or at the least, its intent to facilitate memorization so that the reader could both remember the prayer during service and teach the prayers to others without reliance on the text.

⁷⁰ Rubin, *Corpus*, pp. 152–154; Duffy, *Stripping*, p. 119.

of their journey through the liturgical year to Easter Sunday.⁷¹ Yet, as the clergy taught and the laity well understood, this much anticipated reception could only be gained through the acceptance of charity. A late medieval English sermon recounts a cautionary tale of a woman who feigned charity with her hated enemy in order to receive communion on Easter day. When she later boasted of her deception, a devil appeared and strangled her.⁷² The wrathful and violent rejected the ideal of charity and therefore, God, in the form of the Eucharist, rejected those who were wrathful and violent.

No one who remained wrathful was supposed to receive the host because its effectiveness would be nullified by the presence of such a great, divisive sin.⁷³ Even mere thoughts of wrath were dangerous.⁷⁴ The priest specifically instructed parishioners before the reception of communion that they must eschew wrath and make peace with their neighbors:

Good men and women, y charge yow by the Auctoryte of the holy churche, that no man nother woman that this day proposyth here to be comenyd [communicated] that he go note to Godds bord . . . lase he be of ys synns clen confessyd, and for hem contryte . . . Furthermore, I charge yow yf ther be eny man or woman, that beryth yn his herte eny wrothe or rancor to eny of his evencristen [fellow christians] that he be not ther howselyd, ther to the tyme that he with hym yn perfyte love and cheryte, for ho so [whoso] beryth wrethe or evyll wyll in herte, to eny of hys evencristen, he ys note worthy hys God to receyve; and yf he do, he reseyyvthe his dampnacyon, where he schuld receyve his salvacion.⁷⁵

The clergy also employed the analogy of ‘livery and maintenance’ by noting that parishioners should receive communion, “arrayde in Godys lyvere, clothyd in love and charyte” rather than arrayed in “the fendys lyvere, clothyd in envy and dedly wrath.”⁷⁶ These instructions

⁷¹ Duffy argues that most villagers cared about and attended parish mass. He even goes so far as to argue that attendance at daily mass “was commonplace”. This may be a bit of an exaggeration but Duffy’s emphasis on the centrality of parish ritual and the mass to most villagers appears well founded. See Duffy, *Stripping*, pp. 99–100.

⁷² *Middle English Sermons*, ed. W. O. Ross, EETS no. 209 (London, 1940), p. 62.

⁷³ Duffy, *Stripping*, pp. 92–94.

⁷⁴ *Reconciliatione*, pp. 65–68.

⁷⁵ W. Maskell, *Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London, 1846–1847), 3: 348–349. A similar admonition occurs in Mirk, *Festial*, pp. 130–131; Duffy, *Stripping*, p. 94.

⁷⁶ Duffy, *Stripping*, pp. 94–95; Mirk, *Festial*, pp. 131–132.

illustrate that the host, through its association with the ideal of charity, challenged the laity to reconsider their assumptions about the propriety of vengeance and violence.

Along with the link between the host and charity, the clergy also stressed humble, restrained conduct before the Eucharist. Pride and aggression angered God and disrupted the liturgy. Synodal statutes, confessionals and lay liturgical books emphasized that parishioners must kneel reverently during the mass and also bow their heads at the sacring.⁷⁷ The *Lay Folks Mass Book*, recognizing the potential for quarrels during the mass, counseled parishioners that “Til a Masse was seid to ende/A Mon schulde talke with fo nor frende,/But holde him stille as ston.”⁷⁸ This poignant image of parishioners kneeling with bowed heads before the host, purposefully forgetting friend and foe alike, conveys the clergy’s insistence that religion provided a more peaceful system of social relations, one which did not require the maintenance of status through aggression. John Mirk advised parish priests to instruct their parishioners not to lean on the wall and not to chatter during the mass but instead to kneel reverently in the presence of God.⁷⁹ A late medieval English sermon implored parishioners to leave temporal aspirations behind and not to take notice of others’ presence or absence during the service—evidence that parishioners were inclined to record who had maintained their ‘worship’, or honour, by attending divine service.⁸⁰ Tudor instructional texts for householders also required a similar pensive, inoffensive manner.⁸¹ Such respectful and restrained behavior encouraged introspection and an acceptance of pious comportment as a point of honour.

Intense respect for the presence of God often developed into an intense dread. The fact that most parishioners only received com-

⁷⁷ J. Mirk, *Instructions for Parish Priests*, ed. E. Peacock and F. J. Furnivall (London, 1902), p. 10; *Councils and Synods*, p. 143; *The Book of Vices and Virtues*, ed. W. N. Francis, EETS no. 217 (London, 1942), pp. 237–239; Nicholas Love, *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* (London, 1926), pp. 297–301.

⁷⁸ *Lay Folks*, p. 138.

⁷⁹ Mirk, *Instructions*, pp. 8–9.

⁸⁰ *Middle English Sermons*, p. 154; *And ther-fore, frendes, counte not hem that are absente fro the church, ne beholde hem nougth that goyth owte, but only when thou arte comon to the church preye to God*

⁸¹ Duffy [*Stripping*, p. 118] refers to the instructions of Richard Whytford, *A Werke for Householdors: A Dayly Exerccyse and Experyence of Dethe*, ed. J. Hogg (Salzburg, 1979), p. 34.

munion on Easter day is directly attributable to concerns over the unworthy reception of such an awesome power.⁸² The elaborate protection of the host by a canopy and monstrance during the solemn procession on the feast of *Corpus Christi* reinforced the lay audience's sense of wonder and their belief that the host possessed magical powers which must be contained either by the monstrance, the priest or rood screens. The early fifteenth-century Yorkshire cleric, Nicholas Love, in his popular treatise, *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, instructed his readers that God would only bestow the grace of the Eucharist to those who dread him. Those who refused to fear God's power were unworthy to receive communion.⁸³ In essence, dread of divine violence became a prerequisite of eucharistic piety. As will be seen, the ability of the host to inspire fear would provide the clergy with an effective deterrent for physical aggression and also an immediate defense against blossoming conflict.

The Eucharist and the very structure of the church demanded pious demeanor and peaceful restraint and, as the court records show, individuals adopted these ideas and adapted their behavior in numerous ways. There are, of course, many cases of violent behavior in churches or cemeteries that do not display any explicit regard for religious prohibitions of violence.⁸⁴ If even Margery Kempe believed that a mob was coming to attack her while she prayed in a local church, we can assume, in spite of Margery's clear propensity for paranoia, that lay parishioners did not always believe in the ability of the sacred to deter violence.⁸⁵

Even so, the court rolls do show that the laity recognized the direct connection between hallowed ground and peace. The proclivity of officers of the court to deliver writs and make arrests in church reflects not only the practical idea that most villagers could

⁸² Rubin, pp. 63–65. For a brief discussion of the dread which the host could inspire see Duffy, *Stripping*, pp. 107–108.

⁸³ Love, *The Mirror*, pp. 299–300.

⁸⁴ See for example: PRO KB 9/349/159, 9/12–2/183, 9/85–1/3, STAC 2/8/78–94, 2/19/319, 1/9 (this case has a tremendous clash of combatants in the chancel but, upon closer inspection, there may be some interesting ideas about violence at work); *Select Cases in Chancery*, ed. W. P. Baildon, Selden Society no. 10 (London, 1896), pp. 77–78.

⁸⁵ Margery Kemp, *The Book of Margery Kemp*, ed. B. A. Windeatt (New York, 1994), p. 56.

easily be found in their parishes on Sundays but also an assumption that attendance made parishioners less quarrelsome.⁸⁶ Officers and apparitors recognized that outside of a religious setting, parishioners were not inclined to submit to arrest 'like a sheep before the shearer'. For example, Mary Walworth and Richard Kyle violently slammed a door shut on an approaching apparitor and Thomas Benester threatened to kill one with the words, "Thou horson knave woute thou tell me who set the awerke to summon me to the courte, by Godes woundes and by this gold I shall breke thy hede."⁸⁷ Conversely, indicted parishioners realized that Sunday worship could lead to imprisonment. Edmund Sterre in Lincolnshire failed to attend church in Beconsfield on numerous occasions out of fear of the execution of a royal writ against him.⁸⁸ Arrests and writ-deliverance in church were so frequent in the late Middle Ages and Reformation that by the seventeenth century, Richard Gough could safely classify such actions among the quaint customs of "those days".⁸⁹

In church, fear of God and fear of public contempt for those who disturbed divine service blunted the aggressive impulses of many parishioners. In one particular Star Chamber case, the sheriff expressly noted that he delivered his writ into the church because he knew that the usually hostile recipient would be more docile. In 1532, John Curley, constable of the parish of Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire, explained to the court that he and John Casse had tried and failed to serve writs to Edward Slade on many other occasions. Curley thought that unless he served the writ in church, Slade would forcibly

⁸⁶ For an interesting case of arrest in church, see PRO STAC 2/30/38 involving violence in a Yorkshire parish before 1513 due to an officer's attempt to arrest John London. In a reversal of the typical 'arrest narrative' in which the arresting officer is assaulted, London charges that the officer assaulted him in church while the defendant, John Rowth, claims that he had obtained a writ of *capias* against the London but does not know how or when the officer executed his duty.

⁸⁷ *A Series of Precedents and Proceedings in Criminal Causes, extending from the year 1475 to 1640*, ed. W. Hale (London, 1847), pp. 96–98.

⁸⁸ *Visitations in the Diocese of Lincoln, 1517–1531*, ed. A. H. Thompson, Lincoln Record Society nos. 33, 35, 37 (London, 1940–47), 2: 13.

⁸⁹ The execution of writs in church would continue well into the seventeenth-century. In Richard Gough's *History of Myddle*, Reese Wenlock on behalf of Thomas Bradocke tried to deliver a writ to William Tyler but Tyler slammed the door on him. Wenlock put his foot in the door and then tried to jump on Tyler but was pulled off. Later Bradocke sent a tenant to serve a writ to Tyler in church "for in those days all writs and processes might bee served on the Lord's day." See, pp. 110–112.

resist and perhaps hurt him. Therefore, Curley attempted to serve the writ in a “quiet manner” between the low and high masses. Displaying his sensitivity to sacred surroundings, Curley specifically noted that Slade tried to stab him “in the church” and strike him with a staff “in the church.”⁹⁰ For this constable, sacred space required discretion on the part of both the officer and the arrested.

Even if the recipients of writs or the arresting officers themselves were belligerent, the narrative of events often reveals an expectation of restraint among attendant parishioners. For example, in a plaintive letter to Agnes Paston, Sir Robert Williamson, the vicar of Paston, lamented the lawsuit which had been brought against him after he and other parishioners had attempted to stop the sheriff of Bromholm from making an arrest in church. Williamson emphasized the exasperation of the congregation and the sinfulness of the aggressors whose violence caused them to “stand out of peril of soul.”⁹¹ Williamson indirectly illuminates the consensus between clergy and laity about physical restraint during mass in his assumption that Agnes Paston would be as horrified as he was by the belligerent disruption of divine service. For priests like Williamson and parishioners like the Pastons, violence during the mass was sinful and sacrilegious. Ironically, the Armburgh letters recount how a local rival in 1443 delivered a subpoena to Robert Armburgh in the abbey church of Westminster only to be struck ill by God for the “offence that he dyde in the holy place.”⁹² This account displays both a conviction on the part of the rival that those who attended church would be more passive and a belief on the part of the Armburgh family that sacred spaces prohibited all aggression, even aggressive litigation. With each foray into the church, officers and arrested trod the line between piety and impiety while attendant parishioners and priests took note of those who chose sacrilege instead of, or in addition to, pursuit or seizure.

⁹⁰ PRO STAC 2/26/336. Curley’s precise timing and reference to “quiet manner” further evince his understanding of passivity among the sacred.

⁹¹ *Paston Letters*, ed. N. Davis (Oxford, 1971), 2: 18. Furthermore, in the mid sixteenth century, the vicar and parishioners of Hayes, Middlesex, were angered and shocked when Henry Kyng and his friends threatened an approaching apparitor right out of the church with the cry, ‘It would be well done to make the sayd apparitor to eate the sayd citation,’ see, PRO STAC 2/8/78–80.

⁹² *Armburgh Papers*, ed. C. Carpenter (Oxford, 1998), p. 64.

The court records yield still other examples of lay support for prohibitions against violence on hallowed ground. On numerous occasions, those who wished to commit acts of aggression tried first to drag their victims out of church.⁹³ Once the aggressors had separated their prey from prayer, verbal and physical assault frequently ensued. On the Feast of the Holy Innocents in 1478, John Roche, gathering with a gang of armed men, marched into a parish church in Yorkshire and proceeded to drag out John Wilkinson, the vicar, and William Hamerston. Then, the angry cohort beat Wilkinson and Hamerston, the two 'holy innocents' so to speak, until they were visibly wounded.⁹⁴ Similarly, in Chester on the Sunday after the feast of St. Anthony in 1519, Thomas Browne and his family were first dragged out of their church and then threatened at knife-point by Thomas Massy until other parishioners intervened.⁹⁵ Sometimes, the cries of aggressors made clear their intent to avoid violence in church, yet still shame and capture their enemies, by dragging them away. In the disputed arrest of Edward Slade at Gamlingay, one pro-Slade deponent charged that armed servants of his enemy, Thomas Chechyley, came into the church and grabbed Slade while yelling, "pull him out of the church, pull him out of the church."⁹⁶ Even though physical assault was usually delayed rather than denied in cases such as these, there is, nevertheless, a clear indication that parishioners tried to avoid bloodshed in their churches.

Now let us finally turn back to our original anecdotes, taken from rolls of the court of King's Bench where laconic and formulaic Latin is the norm. These two cases are exceptional for their detailed and textured statements. The Yorkshire case, involving the Percies, displays lay reverence for the host in spite of extreme aggression while the Herefordshire case displays an understanding of the deleterious effects of violence on the sacred and how those effects could be amended.

⁹³ PRO KB 9/349/94; PRO STAC 2/7/210, 2/15/51, 2/15/316, 2/16/229–234, 2/19/248, 2/19/284, 2/19/319, 2/26/336, and to some extent 2/7/167 (the defendant is accused of waiting by the open door until the mass was over so that he might attack the plaintiff in the churchyard). *Yorkshire Star Chamber Proceedings*, ed. W. Brown, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series no. 41, (York, 1909), pp. 73–74.

⁹⁴ PRO KB 9/349/94.

⁹⁵ PRO STAC 2/7/210.

⁹⁶ PRO STAC 2/26/336.

Christian demands for reverence before the host could affect the actions of even the most quarrelsome. When Percy charged into the church to capture Laurence Caterall, he brought with him a set of assumptions about the use of violence. By contemporary standards, Percy's actions were acceptable.⁹⁷ First, he sought, as Caterall's social superior, to enforce his will on a lesser subject in spite of Caterall's status as bailiff of the wapentake. Second, Percy's seizure and confinement of Caterall suggest that he, like many assailants in the Middle Ages, enacted violence as an alleged 'officer of court'. Lastly, it is difficult to believe that Caterall was *not* somehow part of the Percy/Neville feud, a protracted and implacable vendetta which formed the subject of numerous King's Bench inquiries. If Caterall was indeed a participant, then Percy's aggression would have been even more legitimate in the eyes of contemporaries.

Whereas the sacred space of the church did not inhibit Percy from violence, the sight of the host did. Indeed, this particular account is the most detailed version of the case and it still does not charge Percy with further aggression after his encounter with Eucharist.⁹⁸ Though the vicar's recourse to the host may not have initiated a perfect Pavlovian response in which Percy immediately climbed off the altar and bowed his head, there are clear signs that he was pacified. When the vicar lifted up the Eucharist as he would for the sacring, he confronted Percy with the demands of religion, in particular, reverence for the body of Christ. The image of the host sharply reminded parishioners of their Christian identity at a time when both the Church and Crown were vigorously attempting to eradicate Lollardy and its challenge to the doctrine of transubstantiation.⁹⁹ By the mid fifteenth century, both the clergy and laity suspected individuals of Lollardy if their actions or words lacked respect for the Eucharist.¹⁰⁰ Only the most negligent or impudent of orthodox

⁹⁷ Maddern, *Violence*, p. 110.

⁹⁸ Another account of the Percy indictment is found in PRO KB 9/149/55.

⁹⁹ Another interesting example of how the host reinforced Christian identity can be seen in late medieval Valencia when the tranquil relationships between Christians and Jews in Morvedre was shattered by clerical processions. In 1314, Jews who had sought refuge from the approaching processions in the houses of their Christian friends were cast into the street by these same friends because they did not want to appear 'un-Christian' before the host. See the chapter "Putting the Jews in their Place," in M. Meyerson, *An Iberian Frontier: The Jews of Morvedre, 1298-1492* (Princeton, pending).

¹⁰⁰ See for instance: *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428-1431*, ed. N. P.

laity would be so unbridled before the host as to endanger their status as true Christians. Indeed, Percy's actions suggest that the sight of the host induced an almost visceral urge toward peace with fellow Christians and also an urge toward physical restraint which overcame even the most aggressive of impulses.

This profound internalization of the doctrine of transubstantiation can be seen in other even more violent instances. In 1458 a wild battle between some inhabitants of Fleet Street and "men of the court" occurred in London and carried on for more than three hours. As the inhabitants were gaining the upper hand and a wholesale slaughter was about to commence, a procession of clergy marched to the scene bearing "our lordes body" with them. The procession of the host through the throng of combatants quickly ceased the riot and pacified the angry mob.¹⁰¹ Confronted by the very body of Christ, even the most belligerent were quickly cowed. The host initiated a 'face to face' encounter with God and irreverence at such a moment jeopardized the souls of aggressors and threatened to place them outside of the Church—a price which few were willing to pay.

The Herefordshire case also evinces a rich mixture of clerical and lay beliefs about violence and the sacred. In his failed attempt to stop John and Vaughn, the vicar tried to remind them verbally that their very identity as Christians required peace and charity. He demanded that John and Vaughn stop their violent behavior out of respect for God's name in general, and more specifically out of reverence for Christ's body and for the sacred space in which they stood. Although the vicar's admonition recalled the exact symbols which the clergy intended to act as counterpoints to aggression, his intervention only succeeded in transferring the violence onto himself. Unlike his counterpart in Yorkshire who employed the visual stimulus of the host as a means of pacification, the Herefordshire vicar relied on verbal provocation and his own body as a means of intervention. Although he too was sacred by the sacrament of ordination, this vicar could not have hoped that his own body would

Tanner, Camden Society no. 20 (London, 1977), pp. 45, 67, 199. Most Lollards publicly questioned transubstantiation and some even belittled the sacring as a con-juration or an idolatry of the simple minded.

¹⁰¹ *Six Town Chronicles of England*, ed. R. Flenley (Oxford, 1911), pp. 146–147; S. Bridgen, "Religion and Social Obligation in Sixteenth-Century London," *Past and Present* 103:2 (1984): 77.

create the same emotional reaction as the sight of Christ's body in the Eucharist. Furthermore, his verbal admonishment appears to have been far less effective than the Yorkshire cleric's ritualized elevation of the Eucharist. No matter how much literacy among the laity and sermonizing by the mendicants had increased in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, society was still tied tightly to ritual and its symbols as the prime means of communication and association. Proponents of verbal admonishment would not find a very receptive audience until the blossoming of the Reformation under Edward VI.

The most interesting facet of the Herefordshire case lies in the actions of Vaughn and John after they have wounded the vicar and, *ipso facto*, polluted the church. Afterwards, according to the jury's indictment, they "forced the vicar just after that beating to say the mass against his will to the disquiet of the people in church (*ibidem prefatum vicarium recenter post illam verberacionem ad missam suam dicendum contra eius voluntatem cogerunt in pertubacionem populi domini*).” This is an exceptional statement for cases which involve violence against a clergyman or violence in a church. The usual phrase charges *the exact opposite*; that the violence of the aggressor forced the disruption of the mass to the disturbance of the priest and people. The word *perturbacionem* conveys the profound agitation and unease of the parishioners who clearly understood the effect of bloodshed upon the holiness of the mass and the sacredness of the church. With such a visibly disturbed group standing around them, the two aggressors needed to make amends quickly.

If we recall that a mass was the final aspect of the reconciliation ceremony and that all masses had to cease if a church was polluted, Vaughn and John's actions become more comprehensible. Either they were trying to reconsecrate the church *ad hoc* or they were trying to prove that the church was not polluted and hence lessen their offense. Most likely, Vaughn and John were trying to mitigate the impact of their violent and sacrilegious actions by having the mass continue. Ironically, even though they recognized that their brutality had disturbed the divine, they sought to resolve the crisis through further violence, figuratively speaking, a 'shotgun' mass. Such seemingly irrational behavior would not have been as baffling to contemporary witnesses for Vaughn and John's actions reveal a discernment of the distinctions between restorative violence and contaminating violence. Restorative or purgative violence, as best exemplified in Christ's passion, mended social orders and humanity's relationship

with the divine while contaminating violence tore the social fabric asunder and provoked the wrath of God.¹⁰² The Church and lay society recognized both forms of violence and they applauded the former while condemning the latter. Standing self-consciously before the clearly agitated parishioners, Vaughn and John realized that their initial harassment of the vicar was inexcusable and therefore they hastily tried to enact their own loutish form of restorative violence. Their misguided attempt at atonement only exacerbated their original sin of sacrilege and increased the disgust of onlookers. Though some parishioners were clearly less adept than others at negotiating between the use of violence and the demands of religion, their efforts and reactions still reveal the laity's abhorrence of aggression among the sacred and their consideration of violence as impiety.

Finally, this brief investigation of clerical efforts to delegitimize violence and the manner in which such efforts affected lay behavior suggests a reassessment of a fundamental, theoretical 'hobbyhorse' among late medieval and early modern historians, the civilizing process as defined by Norbert Elias.¹⁰³ This process involved a progressive reorientation of the standards according to which society evaluated the conduct of individuals as honorable or dishonorable. As courtesy and physical restraint became more important than martial prowess for one's social standing, acts of physical violence became increasingly stigmatized as dishonorable. While Elias develops his theory of civilization from an extremely broad and secular perspective, utilizing mainly humanist works on table manners and child rearing, he neglects a crucial element, the role of religious institutions. Instead, Elias downplays the role of religion by asserting that "religion never has in itself a civilizing or subduing effect, on the

¹⁰² Both Phillipa Maddern and Renee Girard explore the idea of licit, purgative violence versus contaminating, discordant violence. See especially: Maddern, *Violence*, pp. 75–87, 98; R. Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore, 1972), ch. 1 and ch. 10.

¹⁰³ N. Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners* (Cambridge, 1994). My dissertation, titled "Polluting the Sacred: Violence and Religion in English Daily Life, c. 1400–1553", explores the ways that the clergy endeavored to delegitimize the use of violence as well as how parishioners and priests advanced, adopted or rejected clerical ideas during interpersonal conflict. Moreover, this study explores how the clergy altered society's understanding of violence as a means of dispute resolution and the changes in this understanding brought about by the early stages of the English Reformation.

contrary, religion is always exactly as 'civilized' as the society which upholds it."¹⁰⁴ This is far too dismissive. As this study has shown, clerical ideas about violence did affect the behavior and attitudes of medieval individuals in spite of their contradicting secular norms of aggression. Long before standing armies and humanist handbooks on table-manners appeared, Christian pastors struggled to curb violence and aggression among their flock. Through rituals such as the consecration of sacred space and the liturgy of the Eucharist, clerics challenged their parishioners to regard aggression as impiety. In so doing, the Church aided in the transformation of violence from a normative and often commendable aspect of social practice to a pathology of brutish individuals and societies. In short, what was then dubbed impiety is now dubbed pathology—the transition has taken time but the two are certainly along the same path.

While the clergy's efforts against violence can be traced through their own rituals and texts, by moving away from such evidence and into the court rolls, we can detect how parishioners tried to resolve the conflict between secular and sacred values. The effects of religion on behavior are not uniformly progressive but they are certainly perceptible. Indeed, the struggle of clerical and lay leaders against violence, which has succeeded in forming our present perception of most religious groups as sources of peace and communal harmony, was not a spasmodic program but rather a centuries-long effort beginning around the first millenium and still continuing in the second. Such a struggle over so great a period of time involved many minor victories, like the ultimately successful effort of our frightened Yorkshire vicar to make Thomas Percy just get off the altar.

¹⁰⁴ Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 164.

WITCHCRAFT AND THE WOODVILLES: A STANDARD MEDIEVAL SMEAR?

John Leland

When Richard, duke of Gloucester, was in the process of establishing his power at the expense of Elizabeth Woodville, her kinsmen, and ultimately her son Edward V, a process that culminated in Edward's deposition and Gloucester's coronation as Richard III, he made a variety of charges against the queen and other members of her family. Some of these charges have been seriously discussed by both Gloucester's contemporaries and modern historians, such as the charge that the Woodvilles were attempting to seize power at Gloucester's expense immediately after Edward IV's death—a charge reported by Mancini which many modern historians were inclined to accept, at least until it was questioned by Rosemary Horrox and Michael Hicks.¹ Other charges Gloucester made have been generally neglected. Modern historians, with few exceptions, have not taken seriously the charge that Elizabeth Woodville and her family practiced witchcraft (or at least astrological forecasting), a charge which Richard apparently made in a letter 10 June, and then presented more specifically at the council meeting 13 June (accepting the date which seems presently to be the consensus, despite the arguments of Alison Hanham) which ended with the arrest of Edward IV's close friend Lord Hastings and several other councillors, and was followed within a few days by the open announcement that Richard of Gloucester would take the throne.² Little has been said of these allegations, and some

¹ Rosemary Horrox *Richard III: A Study of Service*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series No. 11 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989 paperback ed. 1991), pp. 90–94; Michael Hicks *Richard III* (Stroud: Tempus 2001), pp. 51–52, 94, 99, 107–124; Charles T. Wood *Joan of Arc and Richard III: Sex, Saints and Government in the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press 1988), pp. 152–155 gives a good summary of the previously standard description of Woodville ambition.

² Charles Ross *Richard III English Monarchs* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1981), pp. 81–95 and many other accounts listed in Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 113 note 67.

historians have considered them to be obviously false. Many of the sources at the time, and many historians since, have either completely ignored the matter of witchcraft or decided that the charge was a clumsy invention of Richard III's to justify crushing the remaining opposition to his coming usurpation. Ross calls the letter of June 10 "an extravagant claim" and in the most thorough recent discussion of Richard's charges against the Woodvilles, when Hicks asks "Should not we perhaps take seriously the claim of the Tudor chroniclers that Richard charged her (Elizabeth) and Hastings with causing his physical deformity by sorcery?" he appears to mean that we should take seriously the Tudor reports that Richard made the charge, not that the charge itself deserves serious consideration.³ The earliest, and in the opinion of most historians the most reliable, sources for the council at which Hastings was seized and executed and Morton and others were arrested, namely the *Crowland Chronicle* and the report by Mancini, say nothing of the charge of an attack by witchcraft—they simply say Hastings was executed and the rest imprisoned, and state or strongly imply that this was to clear the way for Gloucester's usurpation.⁴ The nearly contemporary, if less reliable, Rous says much the same, as do several versions of the London chronicles.⁵ Following the lead of these sources, a great many modern historians have neglected such evidence as there is for the charge. The charge of sorcery appears in Polydore Vergil in a fairly simple form, describing a straightforward accusation against Elizabeth Woodville of using magic to attack Richard and cause a general debility.⁶ Only Thomas More's account, now generally discounted

³ For the early sources, see the discussion in this paper. For modern historians, see Hicks *Richard III*, pp. 121–129 especially 124 for the charge of sorcery, Ross *Richard III*, p. 81 "an extravagant claim" and note 55 for the scholarly debate, pp. 81–85 for Ross's views on the council of 13 June.

⁴ *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations 1459–1486*, ed. Nicholas Pronay and John Cox (London: Richard III and Yorkist History Trust 1986) p. 158; Dominic Mancini *The Usurpation of Richard III* ed. C. A. J. Armstrong 2d. ed. (Oxford: 1969 repr. Wolfeboro: Alan Sutton 1984), p. 90.

⁵ John Rous *Historia Johannis Rossi Warwicensis de Regibus Anglie* extract tr. as "John Rous's Account of the Reign of Richard III" in Alison Hanham, *Richard III and His Early Historians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 121; *Chronicles of London* ed. Charles L. Kingsford (Oxford: Clarendon 1905 repr. Dursley: Sutton 1977), p. 190.

⁶ Polydore Vergil *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil* ed. Denis Hay Camden Series Third Series 74 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1950), p. 543 discussed in Horrox *Richard III*, p. 113.

on other matters by many historians, expands this to include the allegation that Elizabeth (otherwise known as Jane) Shore was involved, and includes the dramatic detail that Richard claimed that the curse had shriveled his arm (which More says everyone knew had been damaged from birth).⁷ The date of the seizure and execution of Hastings and the arrest of Morton and other councilors has been debated at great length, and the questions of whether Hastings, Dorset, or both had been sleeping with the late king's mistress Shore, and whether they were actively organizing opposition to Gloucester's ambitions, have also been canvassed.⁸ But the fact that the crisis in the council was set off by Gloucester's demanding the council's support against the "sorceress" Elizabeth Woodville who had allegedly cursed him has not been given much attention. Rosemary Horrox did consider it possible that the Woodvilles had been "hopefully dabbling in witchcraft," but added that the charge was "a standard medieval smear,"⁹ a view with considerable justification when the charge is considered in the context of similar allegations made over the previous century or more, but this background, though it may justify the skepticism of modern historians about the charge, should not entitle them to underestimate its possible impact on the queen's contemporaries, not least on Richard himself. While it is only just to concede that nothing in the limited evidence available excludes the assumption of the early sources and modern scholars who believe that Richard was acting purely out of political ambition, it is worth

⁷ Thomas More *The History of Richard III* ed. R. S. Sylvester, *Complete Works* 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press 1963), pp. 46–48

⁸ The well-known debate over the date of the council involved Alison Hanham "Richard III, Lord Hastings and the Historians" *English Historical Review* 87 (1972): 235–48 and idem "Hastings Redivivus" *English Historical Review* 90 (1975): 24–9 maintaining the date June 20 against B. P. Wolffe "When and Why Did Hastings Lose His Head?" *English Historical Review* 89 (1974): 835–44 and "Hastings Reinterred" *English Historical Review* 91 (1976): 813–24 and J. A. F. Thomson "Richard III and Lord Hastings: A Problematical Case Reviewed" *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 48 (1975): 22–30 supporting 13 June; Anne F. Sutton and Peter Hammond ("The Problems of Dating and the Dangers of Redating: the Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company of London 1453–1527" *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 6 (1978): 87–91 also regard the evidence found by Hanham as unreliable. See also Charles T. Wood "Richard III, William, Lord Hastings and Friday the Thirteenth" in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages* ed. R. A. Griffiths and James Sherborne (Gloucester: Sutton 1986): 155–165 and further evidence in C. D. H. Coleman "The Execution of Hastings: A Neglected Source" *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* (1980): 244–247.

⁹ Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 113.

considering the possibility that Richard believed, and even might have had reason to believe, that Elizabeth Woodville was using magic against him, or at least consulting astrologers in the hope of gaining advice helpful to a plot against him. As Michael Hicks said of Richard's propaganda in general, "The most effective propaganda is the truth, and propagandists can be convinced by their own messages." Hicks did not apply this to the witchcraft issue, but it is entirely possible that Jonathan Hughes is correct when he says that fear of witchcraft was the actual cause of Richard's crucial decision to seize the throne.¹⁰ To say this is not necessarily to accept Hughes's overall reading of Richard's "puritanical" character—Louis XI of France was certainly no puritan, but was intensely superstitious, for instance. But certainly something seems to have caused an abrupt change in plans at the time that the witchcraft plot was discovered (or invented). On 5 June 1483, routine preparations were still being made for the coronation of Edward V scheduled for 22 June. On 9 June, a council meeting was held which discussed practical details of paying for the expected coronation. But then on 10 June, Gloucester wrote his letter to York asking help from the city against the "the Quene her blode adherenttes and affinitie which haue entended and daly doith intend to murder and utterly distroy vs & our cousyn the duc of Bukkyngham and the old Royall blode of this Realme and as it is now openly knowen by their subtill and dampnabill wais forecasted the same."¹¹ "Now" is an important word here—Gloucester had already charged weeks before that the queen's brother Earl Rivers and the others he had seized in April had been plotting against him, and that was no new news by June. It seems clear that what was "now openly knowen" was not that alleged plot—which, if it ever existed, had certainly been completely forestalled by

¹⁰ Hicks, *Richard III*, p. 16. Jonathan Hughes *The Religious Life of Richard III: Piety and Prayer in the North of England* (Stroud: Sutton 1997), 166.

¹¹ Horrox *Richard III*, p. 112 describes the financial topics of this council based on her study of the financial memoranda. Richmond in contrast says that it was an exceptionally long meeting of whose subject we know only that "no one spoke for the queen." He suggests it dealt with removal of the duke of York from sanctuary, see Colin Richmond "1483: The Year of Decision (Or Taking the Throne)" in *Richard III: A Medieval Kingship* ed. John Gillingham (New York: St. Martin's Press 1993), p. 50. The letter from Richard to York is in *York Civic Records* ed. Angelo Raine Vol. 1 York Archaeological Society Record Series 98 (1939), pp. 73–74. It should be noted that in Richard III's later proclamation, "now" becomes "notably."

Gloucester's own coup at Stony Stratford. Rather, what was "now" known was precisely that some on the Woodville side had "by subtle and dampnabill wais forcasted" Gloucester's death and that of his then ally the duke of Buckingham—that is to say, predicted it by accursed, and in all probability magical, means. As Hanham suggested in her note, there was already a hint of witchcraft here, a charge apparently expanded on at the council of 13 June. Horrox agreed in her own note on this letter that "Forecasting the king's death may have had overtones of witchcraft for contemporaries."¹²

This charge of magical attack was not the only charge of magical misconduct against the queen. Once her son had been deposed, the deposition was also justified on the grounds of earlier magical misconduct by the queen and her mother. In the petition accepted by the parliament of 1484 as validating Richard III's claim to the throne, the first argument advanced against the marriage of Elizabeth Woodville with Edward IV was that the union was due to magic practiced by Elizabeth and her mother Jacquetta, dowager duchess of Bedford. Again, historians have given much attention to the second argument in the petition—that Edward was precontracted to Lady Eleanor Butler—a claim whose status in canon law was vigorously questioned by Mortimer Levine and judiciously examined in detail by Richard Helmholz—but the allegation of magic has been generally ignored. Ross dismisses it as "the far-fetched charge of sorcery and witchcraft."¹³

In considering the two accusations of magic against Elizabeth Woodville in 1483–84, it is necessary to go back and review previous charges against her mother Jacquetta, who had been dead a dozen years by the time of the final crisis. When the parliamentary petition alleged that Elizabeth and Jacquetta had used magic to win Edward IV as Elizabeth's husband, it said that this was "as the common opinion of the people and the public voice and fame is through all this land."¹⁴ This no doubt was intended to refer back to a record

¹² Hanham *Richard III and His Early Historians*, p. 36 n. 5; Horrox *Richard III* p. 113 n. 66.

¹³ Ross *Richard III*, p. 91. Mortimer Levine "Richard III—Usurper or Lawful King?" *Speculum* 34 (1959): 391–401; Richard Helmholz "The Sons of Edward IV: A Canonical Assessment of the Claim that They Were Illegitimate" in *Richard III: Loyalty, Lordship and Law* ed. P. W. Hammond (London: Richard III and Yorkist History Trust 1986), 91–103.

¹⁴ *English Historical Documents* gen. ed. David C. Douglas (London: Eyre and

in 1471, which exemplified a decision of a great council held 10 February, 9 Edward IV, that absolved Jacquetta, then still alive, of charges of witchcraft which had been brought against her by Thomas Wake, squire, when the king was late at Warwick. The duchess in her petition to the council said that “in the time of the late trouble and riotous season”—by which she meant just after the battle of Edgecote, when the earl of Warwick had temporarily won control of the government—Wake had “caused her to be brought into a common noise and slander of witchcraft.”¹⁵ Wake had brought to certain lords a lead image of a man arms, broken in two fastened with wire, which would probably have been used in a curse against the person whose image it was (a person unspecified in the petition but, according to Warkworth, the earl of Warwick). Wake had also called on John Daunger, parish clerk of Stoke Brewer in Northumberland, to testify that he had another a set of images of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville.¹⁶ Jacquetta certainly would not have been cursing them, and the paired images may have been intended for erotic magic, to encourage their marriage, as later alleged in the petition considered in Richard III’s parliament. Any suggestion that the duchess was a witch and that she had used witchcraft to encourage her daughter’s marriage to Edward would have been warmly received in the days just after the earl of Warwick’s victory at Edgecote, a conflict which occurred in part because the earl had found his position weakened by that marriage. In that battle, according to the chronicler Warkworth, Wake had lost a son fighting for Warwick, and W. E. Hampton adds that in the same battle had fallen the heir of George Neville, Lord Latimer, also fighting for Warwick; George himself died in December 1469, and Wake married his widow Elizabeth, thereby becoming something like Warwick’s step-uncle by marriage. However, by 20 January 1470, King Edward had regained power and the accusations against Jacquetta appeared to be completely discredited. A committee was appointed, consisting of the

Spottiswode 1968–) 4:340–342, based on *Rotuli Parliamentorum* ed. J. Strachey et al. 6 vols. (London, 1767–77), 6:240 (hereafter *Rot.Parl.*)

¹⁵ PRO C81/830/3033. *Rot. Parl.* 6:232; Cora L. Scofield *The Life and Reign of Edward IV* 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green 1923 repr. 1967), 1:498–99 cites John Warkworth *A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of King Edward the Fourth* ed. James O. Halliwell London: Camden Society Original Series 10 (1839): 7.

¹⁶ Same.

bishop of Carlisle, the earl of Northumberland, Lords Hastings and Mountjoy, and Master Roger Ratcliffe, to examine the petition. Several members of the committee—Northumberland, Hastings and Mountjoy—had been among the party which rode through London to welcome Edward IV when he had recently freed himself from Warwick's control, so there is every reason to expect that their investigation was intended to fulfill the king's wishes.¹⁷ The committee took testimony from Wake and Daunger, both of whom now denied any knowledge of serious evidence against Jacquetta. Wake said that he had been sent the image by John Daunger and that all he had said of it (presumably about Duchess Jacquetta using it for magic) was only hearsay from Thomas Kymbell, who had brought him the image from Daunger. Daunger in turn said that the image had been given him by one Harry Kyngston of Stoke, who found it in his house after the "parting" of the soldiers. Daunger added that Wake had told him (after seeing the king in London) that he (Wake) had laid all the blame on him (Daunger) and that Wake had told him to say that he had the other two images, which he denied.¹⁸ The duchess's petition says this feeble testimony had been reported by the commission to a great council which met on 20 January, at which the king had cleared her of the charges, but as divers lords were then absent, she asked that the decision be repeated at the council of 10 February.¹⁹ As the testimony is reported, it does nothing to support a credible charge against the duchess, but it is unlikely that this was its original form. The duchess could hardly have described these self-excusing denials as a slander of witchcraft. Wake testified that the broken image had been shown to various people in the Stoke area before he had it delivered to him by Kymbell (his then bailiff) and apparently it was then accompanied by more lurid gossip about the duchess which he could not substantiate before the council. In terms of hard evidence of the supernatural, the case was certainly weak, but in a broader circumstantial sense it may have

¹⁷ W. E. Hampton "Roger Wake of Blisworth" in *Richard III: Crown and People* ed. J. Petre (Richard III Society 1985), 156 Scofield *Edward IV* 1:503 Hastings' presence on this committee might explain his reluctance to support the charge of witchcraft against Elizabeth Woodville June 13, 1483, especially if that involved reviving the old charge against Jacquetta.

¹⁸ See 15.

¹⁹ Luke O. Pike *A History of Crime in England* (London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1873), 2 vols. 1: 358–360 and see 15.

seemed plausible enough in the context of the time. The duchess had been one of the very few witnesses at her daughter's wedding to Edward, and the wedding had come very suddenly at a time when there were active negotiations to find Edward a more suitable highborn foreign consort. While Edward's lust might be a sufficient explanation, coupled with Elizabeth's melodramatically expressed insistence on preserving her virtue from a more informal satisfaction of the king's desire, it is hardly surprising that those hostile to the marriage might imagine there was something beyond the natural in such an overpowering urge seizing a young king who was notoriously capable of satisfying any number of urges elsewhere. Similar hostility toward the marriage was shown shortly afterward when Warwick went so far as to restore Henry VI; during the redeption, as Hicks notes, the only persons whose lands were confiscated by the crown were Elizabeth Woodville and her mother Jacquetta.²⁰

A parallel accusation had been reported by the chronicler Thomas Walsingham when Edward III in his dotage had doted on Alice Perrers and given her extraordinary political influence. In that case, the magic was allegedly performed for Alice by a Dominican friar (who was also her physician), not by her mother.²¹ A maternal example did exist, however, in Mahaut, countess of Artois, when her daughter Jeanne was estranged from her husband Philip, count of Poitiers (later King Philip V of France) apparently due to suspicion that she had been involved in the scandalous adulteries of her sisters (then wives of French royal princes). Mahaut was accused of using magic, specifically a love potion of blood and herbs, to reconcile her daughter to the count, though there is no suggestion she had used magic to make the marriage in the first case. She was also accused of having had a poison prepared to kill Philip's elder brother, King Louis X, (whose death made Philip king and his wife, Mahaut's daughter, queen) paralleling in a limited way the accusation against Jacquetta (and later of Elizabeth Woodville) for using magic to kill enemies as well as to provoke love. As in Jacquetta's case, the charges against Mahaut collapsed when the accusers were brought before a

²⁰ Michael Hicks *False, Fleeting, Perjured Clarence* 2d ed. (Bangor: Headstart History 1992), p. 74.

²¹ Homer A. Kelly "English Kings and the Fear of Sorcery" *Medieval Studies* 39 (1977): 206–238: 215. F. George Kay *Lady of the Sun: The Life and Times of Alice Perrers* (New York: Barnes and Noble 1966), pp. 139–141.

commission of powerful nobles acting for Philip V. The king himself testified that magic had not been needed to reconcile him to his wife, as he had never quarreled with her, and it is not surprising that the commission followed the king's lead in dismissing the charges.²² An important English case (further discussed below) was that of Eleanor Cobham, whose marriage to Humphrey duke of Gloucester was actually dissolved by Archbishop Chichele apparently on the grounds that she had won Humphrey's love by magic.²³

Although there are these partial precedents for allegations of the use of love magic to win or retain the affections of royalty, there does not seem to be any clear legal ground for Richard III's claim that Elizabeth's marriage to Edward IV was actually invalid because Edward had made it while under the magical influence of Elizabeth and Jacquetta. Canon law of the time considered at considerable length the issue of marriages invalidated by magically induced impotence, but it does not seem to have dealt with the validity of marriages contracted while one of the parties was literally enchanted by the other.²⁴ The *Malleus Maleficarum*, which appeared in Germany just at the time of Richard III's parliament, debated at length the question of whether magic could cause men to love, and ultimately concluded that it could, but though it considered the matter of magically induced impotence at length (and suggested that it was used by young women who had been seduced under promise of marriage, to avenge themselves on their betrayers when the latter married other women), it did not consider the question of love-magic leading to legitimate marriage.²⁵ Thus the claim that Edward IV's marriage was invalid

²² Denis Charles De Godefroy Menilglaise "Mahaud Comtesse d'Artois" *Memoires de la Societe (Imperiale) des Antiquaires de France* 3rd Series 18 (1865): 181–194; Jules-Marie Richard *Un Petite-Niece de Saint Louis: Mahaut Comtesse d'Artois et de Bourgogne 1302–1329* (Paris: H. Champion 1887), 41–42, 57–58; W. R. Jones "Political Uses of Sorcery in Medieval England" *The Historian* 34 (1971–72): 670–687; Lynn Thorndike 3:21–22.

²³ Kelly "English Kings" p. 226.

²⁴ Adhemar Esmein *La Mariage en Droit Canonique* (Paris: L. Larose et Forcel 1891 repr. 1968), 2 vols. 2:284–285 discusses magically induced impotence. Richard Helmholtz informs me (private communication) that the standard canonical text by Suarez does not discuss the invalidity of marriages induced by magic. There are, however, a number of cases of women punished for attempting to use such love spells. Kelly "English Kings," p. 211 note 16.

²⁵ Heinrich Kramer and James (Jacob) Sprenger *Malleus Maleficarum* tr. Montague Summers (1928 repr. New York: Dover 1971), 48–61.

on these grounds appears very tenuous, resting first on weak evidence of magic in this specific case, and secondly on a weak assumption that magic would have invalidated the marriage even if it had been used.

On the other hand, the charge that Elizabeth had used magic—specifically, it appears, astrological magic—against Richard III is much more conventional and perhaps more plausible. The broken figure in the duchess's case implied a magical attack by the widely known image method; in that case, it might have been against the earl of Warwick in 1469, when he had emerged as the most dangerous opponent of the Woodville marriage and of the subsequent elevation of the Woodville family, but it would not have been unreasonable to suppose the duchess's daughter had used such a means of attack against the duke of Gloucester in 1483. As Giles St. Aubyn has pointed out, this was almost the only form of attack against Gloucester which Elizabeth Woodville was plausibly in a position to use at the time he made the accusation:²⁵ her kinsmen had either been arrested (as with Lord Rivers and Sir Richard Grey [Queen Elizabeth's brother and son by her first marriage respectively] or were in hiding and seeking escape into exile [as with the marquis of Dorset, also her son by that marriage]); their soldiers had been dispersed and there was no immediate source of military support for the queen, who had taken sanctuary. That she should resort to magic in such desperate circumstances would not have been unbelievable, assuming she possessed or had access to the necessary knowledge. The expression in Richard's letter to York ("forecasted") strongly implies the use of a form of divination, which may be confirmed by the reference in a London chronicle (MS 2 M6 in the College of Arms, printed as "Historical Notes of a London Citizen") that says Richard's opponents "diuagenyd" the death of the duke of Gloucester—

²⁵ Giles St. Aubyn *The Year of Three Kings, 1483* (New York: Athenaeum 1983), pp. 122–124.

²⁶ College of Arms MS 2 M 6. My own examination confirms Green's transcription *diuagenyd* given in his note Richard Firth Green "The Historical Notes of a London Citizen" *English Historical Review* 96 (1981): 588; in this MS as it stands, the first letter is definitely *d* not *i*; possibly the scribe miswrote an initial *i* in his source (*imagenyd*), but he might instead have miswritten a *g* for *y*, which would make it more like *divined* (*diuayenyd*). The actual reading is *d*, three minims, *agenyd*. See *Oxford English Dictionary* ed. James A. H. Murray et al. Oxford: Clarendon 1933 13 vols. 2:555 s.v. *divine* for variant spellings of *divine*.

the editor suggests reading this as “imagined” (in the sense of planned), an expression which is used in several other accounts of the episode, but the spelling may be more like “divined” than “imagined:” compare the spelling “deuynede” in the Oxford English Dictionary.²⁷ The most likely explanation would be that the queen, desperately seeking certainty in a highly volatile and threatening situation, took refuge in astrology. This was, at the time, an art which was frequently practiced but retained an aura of the forbidden, particularly when its practitioners moved from predicting the future to trying to influence it. Simon de Phares, astrologer to Charles VIII of France (the king who was shortly to sponsor Henry VII’s invasion of England), had to spend much of his time defending the legitimacy of his profession,²⁸ and there had already been several cases in fifteenth-century England of charges that noble patrons of astrology had taken the art beyond its permissible limits by seeking to know the length of royal lives or even to shorten them. Joan of Navarre, the widow of King Henry IV, had been accused of witchcraft against Henry V, and although some see this as a ploy to seize her property, the case apparently involved consulting the astrologer-clerk John Randolf, some of whose astrological manuscripts survive.²⁹ Randolf was later taken from prison to be consulted by Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, who was at that time Henry VI’s heir presumptive.³⁰ His wife, Eleanor Cobham, was accused of going considerably further in the use of black magic against the young king, with the aid of Thomas Southwell, who died in prison, and Roger Bolingbroke and the witch Margery Jourdemayne, both of whom were executed for their parts in the plot, while Eleanor was sentenced to a humiliating public penance followed by imprisonment.³¹ Southwell was an Oxford graduate and a respected physician, probably Eleanor Cobham’s personal physician,

²⁷ Thorndike *History* 4:545–558; Hilary Carey *Courting Disaster: Astrology at the English Court and University in the Later Middle Ages* (New York: St. Martin’s Press 1992), p. 112.

²⁸ Edward Peters *The Magician, the Witch and the Law* (Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press 1978): 124; Johannes Amundesham *Annales Monasterii S. Albani* ed. H. T. Riley Rolls Series 28 part 5 (London: Longman Green 1870–71): 1:38; *Chronicles of London* pp. 73, 143, 298.

²⁹ Carey *Courting Disaster*, pp. 120–121.

³⁰ Carey *Courting Disaster*, pp. 138–144 Pike *History* 1:355–358.

³¹ Carey *Courting Disaster*, p. 141, John Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996), pp. 190–192, J. G. Bellamy *The Law of Treason in England in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

and Bolingbroke was also a respected Oxford scholar before his disgrace. Both used astrology in their professional work as well as in their more dubious service to Eleanor. Their names are attached to a horoscope of Henry VI later copied by Lewis Caerleon, who may have been involved in the Woodville case (as will be seen below), but Bolingbroke also apparently used image magic against the king, as “wax images” were among the “magical instruments” publicly displayed around him before his execution.³²

More recently (in 1477), George, duke of Clarence, Richard III’s middle brother, had been ruined and eventually executed on charges which included his attempt to rehabilitate the memory of his servant Thomas Burdett, who, together with John Stacy and Thomas Blake (scholars of Oxford), had attempted to calculate the nativities (horoscopes) of Edward IV and his son Edward Prince of Wales (later Edward V) and to know when they would die. The calculation found that both would die in a short time, and Burdett and his accomplices were charged with spreading this report, both to undermine the loyalty of the people to the king and to sadden the king thereby, so that his life might be shortened.³³ This was not precisely a magical attack, being technically a psychological attack making use of magically obtained information, but it again showed the use of astrology against royal personages. In a more direct use of harmful magic, Stacy and Burdett were also accused of using lead figures (like those allegedly used by Jacquetta) in order to kill Lord Beauchamp at the request of the lord’s adulterous wife. Hicks considers that the trial in this case (unlike several of the others discussed) was not subject to political pressure, and that Burdett and Stacy were probably guilty of at least some of the charges against them (charges which included non-magical propaganda as well as magic), though they died protesting their innocence.³⁴

Elizabeth Woodville and her mother Jacquetta had certain characteristics which might have made them likely targets for a similar

Press 1970), pp. 126–127 with partial transcript of the indictment pp. 236–237. Kibre misunderstands Southwell’s situation, referring to him as Henry VI’s “royal astrologer.” Pearl Kibre “Lewis of Caerleon, Doctor of Medicine, Astronomer and Mathematician (d. 1494?)” *Isis* 43 (1952): 100–108:103.

³² *Rot. Parl.* 6:193–194. *Third Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office 1842), 213–214; Hanham *Richard III and His Early Historians* pp. 136–137; Hicks *Clarence*, pp. 20–122. Bellamy *Law*, pp. 127–128.

³³ Hicks *Clarence*, p. 122.

³⁴ Thomas Walsingham *Historia Anglicana* ed. H. T. Riley Rolls Series 28 Part 2,

charge. Elizabeth Woodville, like Eleanor Cobham (and, it might be added, Alice Perrers) was seen, at least by her enemies, as too low-born (especially on her father's side) for the rank of queen, a status based entirely on Edward IV's physical desire for her. Jacquetta was from a great European noble family (the imperial house of Luxembourg), albeit a cadet branch, but by being a foreigner she was, like Joan of Navarre, subject to a certain amount of suspicion. To have kinsmen of high rank abroad could be helpful, but it could also cast doubt on one's own loyalty, especially if those kinsmen were themselves enemies of England. Joan of Navarre had experienced this when her son by her first marriage to the duke of Brittany became constable of France (Arthur "constable de Richemont") and then was captured by the English. Suspicion of a natural sympathy for her own son was apparently one reason Henry V distrusted his step-mother.³⁵ Elizabeth Woodville, similarly, had an uncle, Jacquetta's brother Louis de Luxembourg, who as the count of St. Pol played a very equivocal role encouraging Edward IV, Louis XI of France and Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy to make war on each other while promising each of them his support against the others. When Edward (probably wisely) chose to make peace with France instead, St. Pol wrote to Louis offering to persuade Charles to destroy Edward. He was later surrendered by Charles to Louis, who executed him for treason: the extraordinary cooperation of these two great rivals against him is proof of how thoroughly he had forfeited the confidence of the European elite, and his career crowned by such a death can hardly have been said to do honor to Duchess Jacquetta or her daughter—Scofield calls him "the man nobody trusted."³⁶ Lander argued vigorously that the Luxembourg connection made Elizabeth Woodville worthy to be Edward IV's consort, but it is worth remembering that the worthiness of the Luxembourgs themselves was very variable.³⁷

2 vols. (London: Longman, Green 1863–64), 2:331 Kelly "English Kings," p. 218; A. R. Myers "The Captivity of a Royal Witch: The Household Accounts of Joan of Navarre 1419–1421" *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 24 (1940): 263–284.

³⁵ Christopher Allmand *Henry V English Monarchs* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1992), p. 96 describes the capture of Richemont at Agincourt in 1415. The influence of this on his mother's position is my own interpretation.

³⁶ Scofield *Edward IV* 2: 137–138; 144; 149 etc. The quotation is from 144.

³⁷ J. R. Lander "Marriage and Politics in the Fifteenth Century" in *Crown and Nobility 1450–1509*, Edward Arnold 1976, pp. 104–109.

Although this episode (culminating after Jacquetta herself was dead) may have tended to discredit Jacquetta and her family, her aristocratic connections had been more useful for her earlier. In Jacquetta's youth, one of her uncles was the archbishop of Therouanne and a mainstay of the English regime in France headed by the duke of Bedford whom she married; indeed his influence was said to be the cause of Bedford's marriage to her. The marriage (like her daughter's to Edward IV later) may have seemed inappropriate, as it occurred so soon after the death of the duke's first wife, Anne of Burgundy. Anne died in November 1432, and Duke John married Jacquetta in the following April, which did not help the already deteriorating relations between England and Burgundy, then ruled by Anne's brother Philip the Good.³⁸

Jacquetta's first marriage not only made her the wife of the English ruler of a large part of France; it also may have given her the opportunity to learn much about astrology. Duke John did have astrological interests (like his brother Humphrey). A French manuscript contains horoscopes for Henry VI (described as king of France), John duke of Bedford himself, their opponents Charles VII and the Constable Arthur de Richemont. In the opinion of its recent editors this text was prepared for Duke John in 1427 (prior to his marriage to Jacquetta) to provide astrological data useful for foreseeing the course of the English war in France.³⁹ Given this background, it is not unreasonable to believe that Duchess Jacquetta took advantage of astrological advice, and it is not impossible that Wake and the rest were correct in charging that she, like Eleanor Cobham and perhaps Joan of Navarre, went further and used more unquestionably criminal methods such as image magic against her enemies. All

³⁸ *Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland and the United Kingdom* ed. G. E. Cokayne new ed. Vicary Gibbs et al. 13 vols. (1913–1959) s.v. Bedford. James Ramsay *Lancaster and York: A Century of English History (AD 1399–1485)* (Oxford: Clarendon 1892) 2 vols. 1:448 believes the marriage offended the duke of Burgundy. See also Andrew E. P. Grey "Foreign Quarterings in Lancashire Shields" *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 39 (1887): N.S. 3 Liverpool 1889: 2–7, G. Smith *The Coronation of Elizabeth Woodville* (1935), 41–53 for further discussion of Jacquetta's career.

³⁹ Jan R. Veenstra *Magic and Divination in the Courts of Burgundy and France* Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 83 (Leiden: Brill 1998), pp. 119–121 citing Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale ms. lat. 7443—I owe this reference to Craig Taylor. See also Carey *Courting Disaster*: 127–128 and Plate 12, another astrological manuscript compiled for Duke John now at Oxford. St. John's College Ms 18.

in all, the picture of Duchess Jacquetta as a woman familiar with the increasingly popular astrology of the time is probable, and the suggestion that she might have used image magic is at least possible.

If Jacquetta's daughter Elizabeth Woodville had turned to astrology in the critical days of June 1483, she would have been likely to employ a professional astrologer or magician, as Alice Perrers used the Dominican, Joan of Navarre employed John Randolph, Eleanor Cobham used Roger Bolingbroke and Thomas Southwell, and George of Clarence had used John Stacy and Thomas Blake of Oxford. There are several possible candidates for a plausible astrologer or magician involved in the plots against Richard III. One "nigromancer" was definitely involved in the later plotting that led to Buckingham's rebellion a few months after the June crisis. This was Thomas Nandyke, a medical man from Cambridge (the link between medicine and astrology was strong, and often seen as legitimate, as in the well-known example of Simon Forman in the next century), who was at Brecon with Buckingham and John Morton at the time Buckingham rebelled.⁴⁰ After Buckingham's rebellion, Nandyke was involved in a further revolt against Richard III organized by the Brandon family in Colchester.⁴¹ He was outlawed in Richard III's parliament, but later pardoned when Henry VII's parliament revoked the sentences against those involved in the rebellion. His presence among the rebels was discussed at some length by Sir George Buck, the courtier of James I and defender of Richard III, who believed strongly in witchcraft and argued that it was one sign of the folly or wickedness of the parliament which confirmed Henry VII as king after Bosworth that it also revoked the condemnation of a necromancer like Nandyke. (Buck did not dwell on the fact that Nandyke was only one of many outlawed for their parts in this revolt and

⁴⁰ Louise Gill *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion* (Stroud: Sutton 1999), p. 83 cf. *Rot. Parl.* 6:244–251. Kelly 234 For Nandyke's career, see C. H. Talbot and E. A. Hammond *The Medical Practitioners in Medieval England* (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library 1965), p. 352. Carole Rawcliffe *The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham 1394–1521* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1978), pp. 28–35 Agnes E. Conway "The Maidstone Sector of Buckingham's Rebellion" *Archaeologia Cantiana* 37 (1925): 97–119; 102–105. For the medico-magical career of Simon Forman, see A. L. Rowse *Sex and Society in Shakespeare's Age: Simon Forman the Astrologer* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1974) and Barbara Howard Traister *The Notorious Astrological Physician of London: Works and Days of Simon Forman* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2001.

⁴¹ Gill *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion*, p. 120.

then rehabilitated by Henry).⁴² If Nandyke had been an ally of Buckingham prior to the rebellion, presumably he would not have been involved with Elizabeth Woodville in June, as Buckingham was originally one of Richard III's strongest supporters, and indeed was described by Richard as a potential victim, like himself, of the Woodvilles' alleged plot set out in his letter to York in June. But if Nandyke had been in Cardinal Morton's service in June 1483, he might well have been giving astrological advice to the anti-Gloucester faction before Gloucester's abrupt arrest of Morton, together with Hastings and others, at the council on 13 June.⁴³ It is also possible that Nandyke as a Cambridge scholar had ties to Archbishop Thomas Rotherham of York, who was dismissed as Lord Chancellor by Gloucester on 10 May, apparently due to his sympathy for Elizabeth Woodville. He was arrested at the same 13 June council as Morton and imprisoned until Cambridge University, of which he was chancellor, successfully petitioned for his release.⁴⁴ Despite these anti-Ricardian links to Cambridge, Charles Ross pointed out that Richard III displayed a tendency—otherwise rare among English kings—to favor and employ Cambridge scholars rather than Oxford ones. One or more of the Cambridge men Ross describes in Richard's service might have been the source of Richard's information about the magical plot, if it indeed involved Nandyke of Cambridge.⁴⁵

Although Nandyke may have been the most likely candidate for a magical advisor to the anti-Gloucester faction at the time, being the only plotter against Richard (aside from Elizabeth Woodville and her late mother) explicitly described by Richard's charges as a practitioner of black magic, he was not the only possibility. In the plotting against Richard III that led to Buckingham's rebellion, the Welsh physician and astrologer Lewis Caerleon served as a go-between in negotiations between Elizabeth Woodville and Margaret Beaufort, the mother of the future Henry VII, according to Polydore Vergil.⁴⁶ Hilary Carey, in a rather confused passage says "He (Caerleon) man-

⁴² Sir George Buck *The History of Richard III* ed. A. N. Kincaid (Gloucester: Sutton 1979 repr. 1982), pp. 54, 188.

⁴³ Ross *Richard III*, p. 80.

⁴⁴ Ross *Richard III*, pp. 76, 135.

⁴⁵ Ross *Richard III*, pp. 132–136.

⁴⁶ Gill *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion* pp. 11, 174–175, citing Vergil *Historia*, pp. 195–200.

aged to build up a handsome medical practice among the noble members of the Lancastrian faction, numbering among his clients Elizabeth of York, widow of Edward IV, Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond, and her son Henry, Earl of Richmond, later Henry VII. In 1485, when Richmond supported the Duke of Buckingham in a conspiracy to overthrow Richard III, Lewis found himself arrested and imprisoned in the Tower of London."⁴⁷ Aside from the facts that Elizabeth Woodville was not precisely a Lancastrian after years as a Yorkist queen, that "Elizabeth of York" usually refers to Elizabeth Woodville's daughter rather than Elizabeth Woodville herself, and that Buckingham's rebellion was in 1483, this was a fair summary of the situation. Pearl Kibre, who has made the most detailed study of Caerleon, accepted Polydore Vergil's story that Lewis was involved in negotiations between Margaret Beaufort and Elizabeth Woodville prior to Buckingham's rebellion.⁴⁸ Hicks has questioned whether the reports of these negotiations and, in general Tudor involvement in Buckingham's rebellion might have been backdated later when Henry Tudor had emerged as the successful rival of Richard III.⁴⁹ Whether the plotters saw themselves as acting for Henry Tudor or for Edward V may be doubted, but there was undoubtedly plotting against Richard between July and October 1483, and both Richard III and Henry VII behaved as if they believed Caerleon was involved in a significant plot against Richard. Caerleon's own manuscript note on certain astronomical tables states (in Kibre's translation) "After the composition of these tables, which I lost through the plundering of king Richard, I, being imprisoned in the tower of London, composed other tables of eclipses"⁵⁰ and Kibre adds, "The date of the composition of the revised tables is clearly indicated by the example of the eclipse with his observation of it made by Lewis in the tower "in the present year 1485 post meridian, on the sixteenth day

⁴⁷ Carey *Courting Disaster*, p. 156.

⁴⁸ Kibre "Lewis of Caerleon," pp. 101–102.

⁴⁹ Michael Hicks "Unweaving the Web: The Plot of July 1483 against Richard III and its Wider Significance" *The Ricardian* 9:114 (September 1991), pp. 107–109; Hicks *Richard III*, pp. 154–156.

⁵⁰ Kibre "Lewis of Caerleon" p. 102, translating Latin text given pp. 105–106 "Nota quod post compositionem istarum tabularum quas amiseram per expoliationem regis Ricardi, ego existens incarceratus in turre Londoniarum composui alias tabulas eclipsium . . ." citing BMr 12G1 fols. 1–2v, BMsl 1697 fols. 25r–26v, CUsj.41 (B.19) fols. 1r–2v.

of March.”⁵¹ This only proves by direct evidence that Richard had despoiled and imprisoned Caerleon by March 1485, which might be compatible with Hicks’ view that the Tudor-Woodville plot was only created by roughly December 1483, after the failure of Buckingham’s rebellion, but since the only account explaining his imprisonment is Vergil’s which dates the plot before Buckingham’s revolt, the evidence that Caerleon was “plundered” and imprisoned by Richard may be taken as confirming that plot. Similarly, there is evidence after Henry VII’s accession that he was grateful to Caerleon, who was rewarded by a grant of forty marks a year on 22 February 1486, an annuity of 20 marks on 27 November 1486, and a grant for life 3 August 1488 to be a knight of the king’s alms in St. George’s Chapel, Windsor. Again, there is nothing in these grants that explicitly refers to Caerleon’s role in the plot of 1483, but the first two show that Henry was favorable to Caerleon from very early in his reign, and the plot recorded by Vergil is the one known ground for such favor.⁵² A plot based on a Tudor marriage to Edward IV’s daughter only made political sense after Edward IV’s sons were believed to be dead—at the earliest July 1483—and this could not in itself have been what Elizabeth Woodville was considering before 10 June 1483, when her son Edward V was definitely alive (and indeed still nominally king). But if Caerleon was involved in the plotting of July to October 1483 which produced Buckingham’s rebellion, it is politically plausible that he was involved in anti-Ricardian plotting by June of the same year. If Hicks is right that the plotting up to Buckingham’s rebellion was based on the assumption that Edward V was alive, and Caerleon was part of that revolt, then his part as an astrological ally of Elizabeth Woodville in June (rather than primarily an ally of the Beaufort-Tudor connection later) would be even more credible.

The plot as described in Vergil does not involve astrological forecasting or magical attacks on Richard, but though Caerleon is not

⁵¹ Kibre “Lewis of Caerleon,” p. 102 and note 19 “Istam est solis anno Christo in presento 1485 post meridiem 16 diei Marcii, contingentem ego observam in turre Londoni.” from BMr 12G1 fol. 6v.

⁵² Kibre “Lewis of Caerleon,” pp. 102–103. Carey *Courting Disaster*, p. 157. For Caerleon’s career in general see A. B. Emden *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to AD 1500* (Oxford: Clarendon 1957), pp. 337–338, Talbot and Hammond *Medical Practitioners*, pp. 203–204 and especially Kibre “Lewis of Caerleon” 1 pp. 00–108.

specifically described as a magician, as Nandyke was, he certainly had the necessary astrological expertise for such “damnable forecasting.” As was noted in Nandyke’s case, medicine and astrology (and hence more dubious forms of magic) were often linked. As Kibre says, “Although Lewis of Caerleon refers to himself as a Doctor of Medicine, he appears to have left no writings on medical subjects. His own extant compositions relate chiefly to astronomy and mathematics.”⁵³ “Astronomy and mathematics” here included much which would now be called astrology, and Caerleon also displayed a very striking interest in earlier astrologers involved in the cases described above: Carey describes Caerleon’s own autograph manuscript of a text discussing the horoscope of Henry VI made by Southwell and Bolingbroke (in addition to another horoscope of that king); he also left an autograph manuscript of a set of astrological tables prepared by John Randolph for Duke Humphrey of Gloucester.⁵⁴ While this might have been simply a matter of professional curiosity, the fact that he chose to copy in his own hand works by astrologers involved in two of the most notorious (alleged) cases of astrological and magical attacks on English royalty of the time does suggest a particular interest in that most controversial aspect of his profession.

Another copy of Randolph’s tables was made by yet another very plausible candidate for an astrological advisor to Elizabeth Woodville, a name familiar to every reader of Mancini: John Argentine, physician to the young Edward V and reportedly the last of the unfortunate king’s servants to see him alive.⁵⁵ Like Nandyke and Caerleon (and several of the astrologers involved in earlier cases), Argentine is usually described as a medical man, but his medical training involved astrology, and like Caerleon Argentine had an interest in royal horoscopes. Gloucester Cathedral Manuscript 21, said to be

⁵³ Kibre “Lewis of Caerleon” p. 104.

⁵⁴ Caerleon’s copy of the Southwell-Bolingbroke text is in Cambridge University Library MS EeIII 61 (1017) fols. 160v–161. Carey *Courting Disaster*, pp. 120, 138, 156. Caerleon’s copy of Randolph is in the same Ms. fols. 108v–120. It is only fair to note that the copy of Randolph’s work made by Caerleon is anonymous, so he may not have been aware that it was Randolph’s work. As Carey notes, Kibre is mistaken in attributing the tables to Duke Humphrey himself. Kibre “Lewis of Caerleon,” p. 104 Carey *Courting Disaster*, p. 156 note 11 (on p. 218).

⁵⁵ Mancini *Usurpation*, p. 93 Carey *Courting Disaster* 157; for Argentine’s career and manuscripts see A. B. Emden *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1963), pp. 15–16.

written “mostly by and partly, perhaps, for John Argentine” gives a horoscope for Edward IV “secundum calculationum Magistri Johanni Arg.” i.e. Argentine; the same manuscript contains a horoscope of Edward V immediately following that of Edward IV.⁵⁶ Carey remarks that Argentine “could have been the royal astrologer as much as a physician. In this case neither medical prowess nor the science of the stars was of much assistance.”⁵⁷ Given the position of Edward V by June 1483, it would scarcely have been surprising if Argentine had decided that the best service he could do for his young client’s health was to ensure the demise of his uncle and alleged protector. Argentine’s sympathy for Edward V—vividly seen in Mancini’s record of Argentine witnessing the young king’s religious preparations for approaching death—was rewarded under Henry VII very appropriately by his appointment as physician to Henry’s own first son and heir Arthur.⁵⁸

Since Nandyke and Caerleon were both qualified astrologers and soon to be involved in plots against Richard III, and Argentine was also a qualified astrologer and on close terms with Edward V, it is quite probable that any one of them used his astrological skills with the encouragement of Elizabeth Woodville to determine the highly uncertain future of her own son and the contingent future of Richard—for it must have been obvious by June 1483, that the chance for a happy future for one of these two men was likely to be inversely

⁵⁶ Gloucester Cathedral MS 21: folio 21 verso. See Carey *Courting Disaster*, pp. 256–257. John Argentine’s links to other magical manuscripts are discussed in Chapter 2 of Frank Klaasen’s Forthcoming book *Religion, Science and the Transformation of Magic*. I am indebted to him for an advance copy of this material.

⁵⁷ Carey *Courting Disaster*, pp. 157–158.

⁵⁸ Carey *Courting Disaster*, p. 157. It is worth noting that Angelo Cato, for whom Mancini’s report was written, was alleged by Simon de Phares to be a “grant astrologien” who predicted the defeat of Duke of Charles the Rash of Burgundy. Veenstra *Magic*, p. 133; Mancini *Usurpation*, pp. 34, 45. There may have been other diviners associated with Elizabeth Woodville’s household earlier. At the time when she was first pregnant by Edward IV, a Master Dominick in her service was said to have predicted the child was a boy. The method of prediction is not specified; astrology is perhaps the most likely, though there were any number of folk-medicine methods of gender prediction at the time. The prediction was wrong, and it is reported that when Dominick eagerly asked what the queen had, he was told “Whatsoever the queen’s grace hath here within, sure it is that a fool standeth there without”. Scofield *Edward IV* 1:393 The Master Dominick in question is probably Dominic de Serego, who was recorded as physician to the king (Edward IV) and his consort, Elizabeth, queen of England in 1467–75 Talbot and Hammond *Medical Practitioners*, p. 36.

proportionate to the chance for the other. If Richard “aspied”⁵⁹ (as the London record puts it) such a practice, his violent reaction at the council of 13 June would have been natural, even if the “damp-nabill forecasting” only involved predictions of Richard’s lifespan, without going further to the actually malevolent magic he apparently attributed to the widowed queen and her people. As Bellamy notes, there were several fifteenth century precedents for the view that using astrology for predictions about the king’s life was treason, notably the Cobham and Clarence cases discussed earlier, both of which seem to have shaded from simply predicting the king’s death to trying to cause it.⁶⁰ As Hicks points out, three men had been executed on this charge in 1477.⁶¹ On June 10, Richard was not yet king, but his conduct since his seizure of Rivers had made clear that he regarded opposition to himself as equivalent to treason, a view resisted by some of the council.⁶² If the council likewise resisted the attempt to make forecasting Richard’s life (or death) treason, it might account for the sudden crisis in the council of 13 June.

The evidence that there were several possible associates of Elizabeth Woodville who could easily have done the “forecasting” Gloucester charged her with does not prove that she had actually had this done, but it does render the charge more likely to have been at least partially true, and less likely to have been a purely political invention. If the nefarious use of astrology and magic was a “standard medieval smear,” it was because it was a credible charge. There are extant horoscopes for all the kings between Edward II and Richard III except Henry IV and Richard III himself, and Caerleon and Argentine were both familiar with some of these horoscopes⁶³ One of these men may well have made such a horoscope to learn the future of Richard at this critical time. If the horoscope was made by someone like Argentine with links to Edward V, or (as Richard charged) by someone acting for Edward’s mother Elizabeth Woodville, this might well be what brought Richard duke of Gloucester to decide that he would seize the throne himself as Richard III instead of

⁵⁹ Green “Historical Notes,” p. 588.

⁶⁰ Bellamy *Law*, pp. 126–128.

⁶¹ Hicks *Richard III*, p. 124.

⁶² Ross *Richard III*, p. 175; Hicks *Richard III*, p. 124.

⁶³ Carey *Courting Disaster*, pp. 248–257. Kelly reports that similar charges were made in the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI and Elizabeth I. Kelly “English Kings,” 235–237.

merely extending his own term as protector, while crowning Edward V (as the chancellor Bishop Russell apparently expected when he composed his sermon for the abortive parliament scheduled to follow the coronation).⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Wolffe "When and Why," p. 843. This of course is contrary to the view of Hicks *Richard III*, pp. 132–134, that Richard planned the usurpation from the start. This highly contentious matter cannot be settled here, but this paper may be one piece of evidence against his view. I wish to thank A. J. Pollard, Craig Taylor and Richard Helmholtz for their comments on the version of this paper presented at the Fifteenth-Century Conference, and Sharon Michalove and Douglas Biggs for organizing that very stimulating meeting.

MAKING HISTORY: CULTURE, POLITICS AND *THE MAIRE OF BRISTOWE IS KALENDAR*

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The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, begun in 1478/9 by the town clerk, Robert Ricart, contains one of the first chronicles produced in an English provincial town.¹ Flenley, writing in 1911, believed Bristol to have been, ‘after London, the place in which the town chronicle began earliest’.² Not that he thought this a particularly notable achievement, since to his mind provincial town chronicles,

are very similar in type, and almost uniformly lacking in importance. They have all the defects of the London chronicles, the narrow range, the limitation of form and poverty of expression, without the fullness, the participation in and knowledge of events of national interest, and the comparatively clear field which go to make the London chronicles of value for English history.³

Since then, notions of what is ‘of value for English history’ have changed radically, but Bristol’s *Kalendar* continues to be allowed a

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¹ L. Toulmin Smith (ed.), *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, Camden Society, new series, vol. 5 (London, 1872) [henceforth cited as *Kalendar*]. The original MS. is Bristol Record Office [henceforth cited as BRO] 04720/1. Ricart tells us that the *Kalendar* was begun in the mayoralty of William Spencer, in 18 Edward IV (i.e. 4 March 1478 to 3 March 1479): Bristol’s mayors took office at Michaelmas, and Spencer was still mayor on 9 September 1479 (E. W. W. Veale (ed.), *The Great Red Book of Bristol: Text* [henceforth cited as *GRBB*], Part 2, Bristol Record Society, vol. 8 (Bristol, 1937), p. 148; J. Latimer, ‘*The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*: its list of civic officers collated with contemporary legal manuscripts’, *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* [henceforth cited as *TBGAS*], 26 (1903), pp. 108–37, at 133), so Ricart must have begun writing between 29 September 1478 and 3 March 1479.

² R. Flenley (ed.), *Six Town Chronicles* (Oxford, 1911), pp. 28–9. Flenley was unaware of the Coventry Annals, which may predate the *Kalendar* by as much as twenty years: R. W. Ingram (ed.), *Records of Early English Drama: Coventry* (Manchester, 1981), pp. xxxvii, xli.

³ Flenley, *Six Town Chronicles*, p. 27.

place of particular significance in the historiography of provincial culture.⁴

The *Kalendar* begins with an invocation to God, Christ, the Virgin and the saints, and a Prologue.⁵ Thereafter, it is composed of six parts, or 'principall matiers'. The Chronicle is divided between the first three. The last three parts contain a Bristol customal, a collection of charters, and a copy of a London customal closely related to the *Liber Albus*. The last three parts—particularly Part Four's account of the duties and installation procedures of the civic officers—are of undoubted interest, but it is the Chronicle that makes the *Kalendar* exceptional: collections of customals and charters had been around for some time before 1478/9; provincial town chronicles had not. Ironically, while the customal in Part Four has been widely used by historians of urban government, the Chronicle has been largely ignored.⁶ The reason for this neglect is immediately apparent from even the most cursory reading, since the Chronicle has nothing original to say on national affairs, and its coverage of events in Bristol is extremely patchy before the 1440s. Significantly, Lucy Toulmin Smith omitted most of it from her edition of 1872. However, it becomes much more interesting if read for what it tells us of *mentalité* rather than *événements*. In addition, while the importance of the *Kalendar* as a whole has been widely acknowledged, study of the circumstances of its production has not progressed significantly since Smith's edition.⁷ Her introduction and notes display exemplary schol-

⁴ A. Dyer, 'English town chronicles', *Local Historian*, 12 (1976/7), pp. 285–92; R. Tittler, 'Reformation, civic culture and collective memory in English provincial towns', *Urban History*, 24 (1997), pp. 281–302, especially pp. 292–8; idem, *Townsperson and Nation: English Urban Experiences, 1540–1640* (Stanford, 2001), pp. 121–39; D. Hay, 'History and historians in England and France during the fifteenth century', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 35 (1962), pp. 111–27, at 123.

⁵ The intended purpose of this invocation was probably similar to that at the beginning of the Wells 1437 'Constitutional Statement': 'in a sense, these supreme powers were being called to witness, guarantee, and oversee the burghesses' sincerity and the aptness of their regime' (D. G. Shaw, *Creation of a Community: The City of Wells in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), p. 179).

⁶ A good example of the use of the Customal—and limited use of the Chronicle—is provided by D. H. Sacks, *The Widening Gate: Bristol and the Atlantic Economy, 1450–1700* (Berkeley, Cal., 1991), pp. 139–45, 172–81.

⁷ For example, in addition to those works cited in n. 4, A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II: c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1982), p. 227 n. 47; E. D. Kennedy, *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050–1500: XII. Chronicles and Other Historical Writing* (Hamden, Conn., 1989), pp. 2655–6, and

arship by the standards of her time, but 130 years on there is naturally room for reappraisal. The following analysis of the production, sources and purpose of the *Kalendar*, and in particular its Chronicle, views it as the product both of a particular provincial culture and of Bristol's political situation in the late 1470s. The essay begins with a study of the work's contents and sources, then considers the identity of its author, and concludes with a discussion of its intended purpose.

In his Prologue Ricart sets out a plan of the book. He states that the intention behind Part One is to describe the foundation of Bristol and the reigns of all the pre-Conquest kings. The second part will take up the story to the death of King John, and the third will extend from Henry III to Ricart's own day: in fact, later contributors continued the history up to 1698.

Ricart tells us that the pre-Conquest history was 'by recorde of Brutes cronicles'.⁸ Lister Matheson has identified this part as a heavily-abbreviated version of an English *Brut* which was closely related to the Anglo-Norman original, perhaps a direct translation. The *Kalendar's Brut* is written in Gloucestershire English, which of course means no more than that the scribe was a local man, not necessarily that his source was produced locally.⁹ Apart from the Wycliffe Bibles, more copies of the *Brut* survive than any other Middle English work, and over 240 manuscripts of the *Brut* in Anglo-Norman, Latin and English are extant. Not surprisingly, there is no shortage of possible West-Country *Bruts* from which the *Kalendar's* version could have been drawn, although Bristol wills are disappointingly free of references to chronicles of any sort.¹⁰ A chronicle owned in the 1480s

K. L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts, 1390–1490*, vol. 2 (London, 1996), pp. 348–50, all follow Smith, although Kennedy does correct Smith's attribution of *Flores Historiarum* from Matthew of Westminster to Matthew Paris.

⁸ *Kalendar*, pp. 3–4.

⁹ L. M. Matheson, *The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle* (Tempe, Arizona, 1998), pp. 14, 322–3. This work supplements and revises the standard account of the *Brut*, F. W. D. Brie, *Geschichte und Quellen der mitttelenglischen Prosachronik: The Brut oder The Chronicles of England* (Marburg, 1905). See also Brie's edition of *The Brut or The Chronicles of England*, Early English Text Society, vols. 131 & 136 (Oxford, 1906, rep. Woodbridge, 2000). Despite Ricart's explicit statement, Smith erroneously supposed this part to have been taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth: *Kalendar*, p. xiv.

¹⁰ At least as far as wills proved in Bristol are concerned: T. W. Williams, 'Gloucestershire medieval libraries', *TBGAS*, 31 (1908), pp. 78–195, at 92–4.

by the Hill family of Nettlecombe in Somerset incorporates a section from a *Brut*.¹¹ A *Brut* was used as a major source for the *Eulogium Historiarum*, written at Malmesbury Abbey in Wiltshire in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, while the library of Llanthony Priory near Gloucester held no fewer than four *Bruts*.¹² A more intriguing possibility is presented by John Trevisa's probable use of a *Brut* for his continuation of Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*. Trevisa, vicar of Berkeley in Gloucestershire, embarked upon his translation and continuation of *Polychronicon* at the request of his patron, Thomas, Lord Berkeley, in 1387. The Berkeleys had close connections with Bristol and, as we shall see, at least one section of the *Kalendar's* chronicle was drawn from a work with Berkeley associations; it is possible, therefore, that the *Kalendar's Brut* came from the library of Berkeley Castle, and was the same as that used by Trevisa.¹³ However, *Bruts* were common in metropolitan libraries, and given Bristol's close trading, social and political links with the city and the *Kalendar's* use of other London material, a London provenance is perhaps equally likely.¹⁴

The Chronicle begins with Brutus, and the story opens with him already established in Britain. There is no reference to Albina and her sisters, their giant progeny, or the Trojans' wanderings: perhaps these were omitted as distractions from the main point of this passage, which was to demonstrate Bristol's ancient origins.¹⁵ Brutus's first act in the *Kalendar's* version is to found New Troy, or London. There follows a brief account of his descendants, until we reach the warring brothers Belinus and Brennius. Following their rapprochement, Belinus settles in New Troy, and builds a gate 'and callid it Bellyngesgate after his oune name'. His brother meanwhile, 'first founded and billed this worshipful Towne of Bristut that nowe is Bristowe, and set it vpon a litell hill, that is to say, bitwene Seint Nicholas yate, Seint Johnes yate, Seint Leonardes yate, and the Newe yate'. Immediately after this passage comes the famous depiction of

¹¹ Matheson, *Prose Brut*, pp. 12, 266.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 18; Gransden, *Historical Writing*, II, pp. 13–14; Williams, 'Gloucestershire medieval libraries', pp. 156, 160, 176.

¹³ Gransden, *Historical Writing*, II, pp. 220–1; Matheson, *Prose Brut*, p. 18; D. C. Fowler, *The Life and Times of John Trevisa, Medieval Scholar* (Seattle, 1995), pp. 84–117, 176–89. For the *Kalendar's* use of Abbot Newland's Roll, see below, p. 00.

¹⁴ Matheson, *Prose Brut*, pp. 14, 20, 82, 299, 328.

¹⁵ The following is taken from *Kalendar*, pp. 8–10.

Bristol within its wall pierced by the four gates, the whole dominated by the High Cross.¹⁶ The view is probably intended to represent the town as founded by Brennius, Ricart being as untroubled by the existence in the original, pre-Christian settlement of a 'Newe yate' and other gates named after Christian saints as the artist was by churches and a cross erected to commemorate Bristol's 1373 charter. In crediting Brennius with Bristol's foundation the text is merely following the usual version in the *Brut*, both in English and Anglo-Norman.¹⁷ Only the topographical details are peculiar to the *Kalendar's* account of Bristol's foundation. The story then continues, broadly following the *Brut*, until 1066.

Between Part One and Part Two are three short sections, all in Latin. The first is a series of couplets giving extremely brief summaries of all the English kings up to Henry VI, along with the length of their reigns. This was described in the Prologue as a constituent of Part One. The next two sections are not mentioned in the Prologue, and consist of an account of Joseph of Arimathea's foundation of the church at Glastonbury and a list of *notabilia diversa*.¹⁸

The verses on kings have parallels with those found in Arundel MS. 48 at the College of Arms, entitled *Metra de Regibus Angliae* and included in Thomas Hearne's edition of the *Liber Niger Scaccarii*.¹⁹ Smith, following Hearne's attribution, assumed them to be the work of William Worcestre, and on that basis, proof that the Bristol-born scholar was on good terms with Ricart.²⁰ Thanks to McFarlane, we must now treat the first, and so the second, of her assumptions with some care.²¹ However, some of the materials in the Arundel MS.

¹⁶ See below, pp. 304–5.

¹⁷ I am indebted to Dr Julia Marvin for her help with the Anglo-Norman *Brut* on this point. For the Anglo-Norman *Brut*, see J. Taylor, 'The French prose *Brut*: popular history in fourteenth-century England', in W. M. Ormrod (ed.), *England in the Fourteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 247–54. The Bristol foundation story does not appear in Geoffrey of Monmouth: presumably the legend originated in Bristol, perhaps a product of local pride associated with the construction of the new harbour and walls in the mid-thirteenth century.

¹⁸ *Kalendar*, pp. 11–16.

¹⁹ Two volumes (Oxford, 1728), vol. 2, pp. 529–32.

²⁰ *Kalendar*, p. 7.

²¹ K. B. McFarlane, 'William Worcestre: a preliminary survey', *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 196–221, reprinted in his, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), pp. 199–224, at 209–10.

do have strong Worcestre associations—some were indeed written by him—and therefore had the the *Metra de Regibus* been included in the *Kalendar* they might well have suggested some relationship between Ricart and Worcestre: but these are not the verses that we find in the *Kalendar*, merely their analogue. The differences between the two sets of verses are too great to allow that one is simply a version of the other. The *Metra de Regibus* begin with Ethelbert, the *Kalendar* with Alfred; there are numerous minor variations, but most strikingly, the *Metra de Regibus* are written in four-line stanzas, as against the *Kalendar* verses' couplets.²² Such verses on English kings were far from uncommon.²³ Regretfully then, we must reject them as proof of Ricart's association with his illustrious contemporary.

The Latin account of Joseph of Arimathea appears to have been copied from parchments pasted into a tablet, or wooden display box, set up at Glastonbury Abbey for the instruction of Latinate pilgrims. It is similar to, but not identical with, sections in William of Malmesbury's *De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae*, and John of Glastonbury's chronicle, written around 1400.²⁴ The inclusion of this account in a chronicle structured around kings and mayors needs some explanation. The legend of Joseph's visit to Britain enjoyed a resurgence of interest in the later fourteenth century, and with it came the widespread acceptance of his association with Glastonbury.²⁵ Towards the

²² Compare the two poems' verdicts on Henry VI: *Metra de Regibus*: *Inclitus Henricus Sextus de germine dictus/Quamvis & afflictus, Deus illi semper amicus/Defensor fidei verax, & pacis amator/Prospera donet ei regum rex & dominator*; *Kalendar*: *Henricus Sextus/Est verus textus, princeps collegia fundans/Henricus sextus est moribus almus abundans/xxxviij [annos]*.

²³ Perhaps the most famous are those written in English by Lydgate: J. Gairdner (ed.), *Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*, Camden Society, new series, vol. 17 (1876), pp. 49–54. For another set of English verses on kings see I. Harvey, 'Was there popular politics in 15th-century England?', in R. H. Britnell & A. J. Pollard (eds.), *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), pp. 155–74, at 161.

²⁴ *Kalendar*, pp. 7–8; J. Krochalis, 'Magna Tabula: the Glastonbury tablets (parts 1 and 2)', *Arthurian Literature*, 15 (1997), pp. 93–183; 16 (1998), pp. 41–82, reprinted in J. P. Carley (ed.), *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 569–616; J. Scott (ed.), *The Early History of Glastonbury* (Woodbridge, 1981), pp. 42–9; J. P. Carley (ed.), *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey: An Edition, Translation and Study of John of Glastonbury's Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie* (Woodbridge, 1985), pp. 2/3–4/5. Part of the *Kalendar* text is identical to versions of the story in BL MSS. Arundel 220, f. 274, and Cotton Titus D VII, f. 30. Both are in fifteenth-century hands.

²⁵ The following paragraph is taken from V. M. Lagorio, 'The evolving legend

end of the fourteenth century, Abbot John Chinnock sponsored John of Glastonbury's chronicle, in which was created the definitive account of Joseph's coming to Britain, his conversion of the pagan natives and establishment of the island's first Christian church. The growth of interest in Joseph as the founder of British Christianity was more than simply an attempt to improve Glastonbury's pilgrim potential, or the expression of new fashions in chivalric mysticism: it had a very pragmatic political purpose as well. The Joseph story, dating the establishment of Christianity in Britain to within a few years of the Crucifixion, gave a useful bargaining chip to both Chinnock and to the English delegations to the Councils of Pisa, Constance and Basle. For Chinnock, the legend helped him to win his claim to primacy among English abbots. For the conciliar delegates, it provided proof—at least, as far as they were concerned—that Christianity had been introduced to England before its establishment in France at St. Denis, and what is more, by a more exalted personage than the French could muster. The Joseph legend had been brought to the forefront of English culture and diplomacy by the Anglo-French rivalry, but it retained its cultural importance long after the end of Schism and the Hundred Years War. But while literate Bristolians would have been aware of the legend, there still seems no particular reason why one of them should wish to include it in a civic chronicle. The connection may lie with the diocese of Bath and Wells. The diocese included not only Glastonbury but also the southern part of Bristol: the important suburbs of Redcliffe and Temple Fee which lay beyond the river Avon. The Joseph legend shed glory not only on Glastonbury, but also on the diocese as a whole, as shown by Thomas Polton's speech to the Council of Constance in 1417. After describing how Joseph came to Britain with his twelve companions and converted the British, he relates (with breathtaking ahistoricism) how:

The king bestowed twelve hides of land and the diocese of Bath upon them for their support. They are now, it is written, buried in the

of St. Joseph of Glastonbury', *Speculum*, 46 (1971), pp. 209–31, reprinted in Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, pp. 55–81. For further evidence of the popularity of the Joseph legend in the fifteenth century, see F. Riddy, 'Glastonbury, Joseph of Arimathea and the Grail in John Hardyng's Chronicle', in L. Abrams and J. P. Carley (eds.), *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey* (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 317–31.

monastery of Glastonbury, in the diocese of Bath, and the same monastery has from of old possessed the endowment of the said twelve hides.

The Joseph legend therefore links the diocese—and by extension Bristol—to England's foundation as a Christian nation, just as the Brennius story links Bristol to the nation's secular foundation legend.

The third section, *Notabilia Diversa*, is a list of events in ecclesiastical history, beginning with Joseph of Arimathea's foundation of a chapel in Glastonbury, '*ut superius recitatur*'.²⁶ What follows are brief notes giving the dates of foundation of religious orders—the Carthusians, Cistercians, Knights Templar, and the Franciscans—and of particular houses. Of these, six out of eleven were located in the West Country: Muchelney, Tavistock, Tintern, Ford, Kingswood, and Bruton. In addition, there are notices of the great fire at Glastonbury Abbey in 1184 and of the unsuccessful attempt by Savaric, bishop of Bath (1192–1205) to move the See to Glastonbury and claim lordship over the abbey.²⁷ While far from conclusive, the balance of evidence would seem to indicate that the original of this section also derived from Glastonbury, or at least from within the diocese of Bath and Wells. This raises the further possibility that all three sections—the only parts of the Chronicle written in Latin—were copied from the same manuscript.

How a chronicler based in Bristol might come by such a manuscript is suggested by one of William Worcestre's *aides memoire*. In 1478 he noted that certain chronicles of the bishops of Wells were in the keeping of Richard Vowell (probably the same man who was master of the borough of Wells from 1474 to 1487), and that Vowell had recommended that he consult the chronicles at Glastonbury Abbey.²⁸ Was Vowell also consulted regarding materials for the *Kalendar*? Or, to push speculation a little further, did Worcestre have

²⁶ *Kalendar*, pp. 14–16. Does this phrase indicate that the *Notabilia Diversa* followed immediately after the account of Joseph of Arimathea in the source text, or was it inserted by the scribe as he began this section of the *Kalendar*?

²⁷ The latter dated to 1146, despite naming Richard as king. For a brief account of Glastonbury Abbey's 12th-century history, see A. Gransden, 'The growth of the Glastonbury traditions and legends in the twelfth century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 27 (1976), pp. 337–58, reprinted in Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, pp. 29–53.

²⁸ J. H. Harvey (ed.), *William Worcestre: Itineraries* (Oxford, 1969), p. 78/9. See also below, p. 309.

a hand in it after all? While, as we have seen, the inclusion of the verses on English kings does not help to establish a connection with Worcestre, it is still possible that he at least knew about the compilation of the *Kalendar*. He made a brief visit to Bristol in 1478, the year in which work on the *Kalendar* may have commenced, and he was back there in August 1480.²⁹ He was certainly interested in the town's libraries: he made notes from a copy of Josephus's *De Bello Judaico* owned by a priest at St. Thomas's Church, from a copy of the chronicle of Marianus Scotus at All Saints', and from a martyrology in the Dominican Friary, and, at the Hospital of St John in Redcliffe, he noticed a chronicle which calculated the periods from Adam to the Flood, from the Flood to Abraham, and from Abraham to the Nativity. In addition, he transcribed a tablet in Temple Church which told the story of the order of the Knights of St. John.³⁰ He discussed books with members of the laity as well: in September 1480 he rode to Shirehampton, a few miles north of Bristol, to get back from Thomas Young his '*libro magno Ethicorum*' and his copy of '*le Myrrour de Dames*'.³¹ Both Worcestre and Ricart were engaged in bibliographical and historical research, at the same time and in the same place. Bristol, a town of 10,000 souls, must have been small enough for all its resident scholars to know each other, and the town clerk might well have been someone with whom Worcestre thought it worth discussing history.³²

Part Two does not fulfil the Prologue's declared intent that it should tell how, 'this worshipfull Toune hathe be enlarged, fraunchised, and corporated, by whate kinges daies, and by whoos sute and coste'; instead, we have a continuation of the chronicle of national events from 1066 to 1216, drawn largely from the *Flores Historiarum* of Matthew Paris.³³ In addition, there are four short sections which

²⁹ F. Neale, *William Worcestre: The Topography of Medieval Bristol*, Bristol Record Society, vol. 51 (2000) [henceforth cited as Neale, *Topography*], p. vii.

³⁰ Harvey, *William Worcestre: Itineraries*, pp. 322/3, 316/7, 320/1, 304/5, 312/3; Neale, *Topography*, pp. 114/5–116/7. Oddly perhaps, none of these works seem to have been used for the *Kalendar*.

³¹ Neale, *Topography*, p. 252/3.

³² But Worcestre did not know William Spencer, the mayor who commissioned Ricart to write the *Kalendar*. In his notes on Bristol he recorded the hospital founded by Spencer out of the estate of William Canynges, but left a blank where his first name should have been: Neale, *Topography*, p. 224/5.

³³ *Kalendar*, p. 4; H. R. Luard (ed.), *Flores Historiarum*, 3 vols. (Rolls Series, London,

do not appear in the *Flores Historiarum*. The first, coming after the account of William I's reign, is entitled 'Why William conquero[u]r was callid W. Bastard' and gives his descent from Duke Rollo.³⁴ This is immediately followed by two sections: one deals with the earls of Gloucester and their building of Bristol Castle and foundation of Tewkesbury and Keynsham abbeys and St. James's Priory in Bristol; while the second is an account of the Fitzhardings and their foundation of St. Augustine's Abbey outside Bristol.³⁵

The section on the earls of Gloucester is an English translation of part of the *Chronica de Fundatoribus et de Fundatione Ecclesie Theokusburie*.³⁶ The *Kalendar* section is a close paraphrase, rather than a literal translation, of the Tewkesbury Chronicle, beginning with Robert Fitzhamon and ending with Earl William (d. 1183).³⁷ The Tewkesbury Chronicle was written in four hands, all of the latter half of the fifteenth century, and its final entry refers to the year 1476. Ricart may have used it before its continuation to 1476, but if he used the final version, written only a few years before he began his work, then his awareness of the latest products of the abbey's scriptorium is most impressive. Such knowledge may have been gained through contact

1890). Smith identified Roger of Wendover as another possible source for this part (*ibid.*, p. 17), for which see H. G. Hewlett (ed.), *The Flowers of History by Roger de Wendover*, 3 vols. (Rolls Series, 1886, 1887, 1889), but it is difficult to determine what, if anything, Ricart derived from this chronicle.

³⁴ BRO 04720/1, ff. 25–26. It may have been derived from the *Chronica de Fundatoribus et de Fundatione Ecclesie Theokusburie*, f. 11^v: see below, n. 36.

³⁵ *Kalendar*, pp. 18–22.

³⁶ Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Top. Glouc. d. 2, ff. 13–17^v. A transcription by Francis Thynne (d. 1608) is now BL Cotton Cleo. C. III, and was used by Dugdale in his *Monasticon Anglicanum* (vol. 2, ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis & B. Bandinel, London, 1819): see C. H. Bickerton Hudson, 'The Founders' Book of Tewkesbury Abbey', *TBGAS*, 33 (1910), pp. 60–66, and P. B. Pepin, 'Monasticon Anglicanum and the history of Tewkesbury Abbey', *TBGAS*, 98 (1980), pp. 95–7. See also BL Cotton. Vitel. E XIV ff. 268–9v for notes taken from Thynne.

³⁷ The *Kalendar*'s scribe followed the Tewkesbury Chronicle's description of Robert, earl of Gloucester as *consul*, but treated it as a surname, rather than a title. He was also confused by the Tewkesbury chronicler's slip in assigning Earl William's death to 1173. He gives the year of grace correctly, as 1183, but adds that this was in Henry II's twentieth year, 1173/4. He also departs from the Tewkesbury Chronicle's description of William Rufus's gift of Barton Regis to Fitzhamon as a reward for his services to William's father (*Iste Willielmus [William Rufus] processu temporis dedit honorem Brictrici Roberto filio Haymonis cum omni libertate et integritate quibus pater suus vel etiam ipse Brictricus unquam tenuerunt et hoc egit propter magnos labores quos predictus Robertus sustinuit cum patre suo*), recounting this as a grant made by the Conqueror 'bi assent of his son William Rufes that succedid him kinge': *Kalendar*, pp. 18–20.

with St. James's Priory, which was a cell of Tewkesbury, or Bristol's St. Peter's church, of which the abbey was patron.

The Fitzharding/St. Augustine's interpolation is probably derived from a Latin chronicle of the Fitzharding lords of Berkeley and their patronage of St. Augustine's Abbey. This may have been the work of John Trevisa. In 1489/90 Abbot Newland produced another English version of this chronicle—'Abbot Newland's Roll'—which was continued after his death in 1515.³⁸ Copies of the Roll may well have been found both at Berkeley Castle and St. Augustine's Abbey. The two English versions are not identical, so perhaps Abbot Newland did not know of the *Kalendar's* translation, thought that he could do better, or was in fact using a different original.³⁹

The final addition occurs at the end of Part Two, following the account of King John, and is a summary of the privileges granted by his charter to Bristol as count of Mortain in 1188. The charter was of great significance to Bristol's constitutional development, a fact acknowledged by Ricart, who described John as one 'that moost freest and moost largiest enfranchised this worshipfull Toune'.⁴⁰

Part Two of the *Kalendar* abridges the standard text of the *Flores Historiarum* to varying degrees. References to matters unrelated to England or France are often omitted, with, for example, only the most important events in the Crusades being included, but even English politics often get only sketchy treatment. Also omitted is a good deal of material relating to matters ecclesiastical, but numerous comets and other ominous aerial phenomena do find a place. There is no obvious ideological or political agenda influencing the selection of material. Given the special place accorded him in the foundation of Bristol's privileges, one might expect King John to be treated with some generosity. His reign is dealt with at relative length,

³⁸ H. Jeayes, 'Abbot Newland's Roll of the Abbots of St. Augustine's Abbey by Bristol', *TBGAS*, 14 (1889–90), pp. 117–30. Newland claimed to have translated the Roll from a Latin genealogy of the Berkeleys composed by John Trevisa, but the badly damaged MS. at Berkeley Castle attributed to Trevisa does not appear to be closely related to Newland's work: my thanks to Mr David Smith, Berkeley Castle archivist, for this information.

³⁹ The first possibility is less likely, since he—or his continuator—appears to have used the *Kalendar's* list of civic officers for the mayor-list incorporated into the Roll: A. Sabin, 'The foundation of the abbey of St. Augustine at Bristol', *TBGAS*, 75 (1956), pp. 35–42, at 37.

⁴⁰ *Kalendar*, p. 4; N. D. Harding (ed.), *Bristol Charters, 1155–1373*, Bristol Record Society, vol. 1 (1930), pp. 8–13.

and while the *Kalendar* omits the *Flores Historiarum*'s report of the speculation surrounding John's part in the death of Prince Arthur, it does include the section on his extortions, stating in no uncertain terms that in 1207 'King John set hym silf alle vpon extorcion and rapynes setting his truste al vpon grete tresour'.⁴¹ Several local events included in this section are not derived from the standard text of the *Flores Historiarum*. These mostly concern the diocese of Bath and Wells and the earls of Gloucester, and could have been taken from the Glastonbury and Tewkesbury chronicles.⁴²

The main text is accompanied in places by marginal notes, indicating particularly significant events. Thus, the foundations of St. Augustine's, Tewkesbury and Keynsham abbeys, St. James's Priory, Bristol Castle, and, somewhat unexpectedly, the earl of Gloucester's building of Cardiff Castle are all noted in the margins.⁴³ By the account of Henry I's imprisonment and blinding of Robert, duke of Normandy in 1106 are the words 'the p[er]petuell p[ri]sonyng of Robb[e]rt duk of Normandy': what made this episode particularly significant for the compiler was not the brutality of Henry, but the working out of divine justice, for in a passage missing from the *Flores Historiarum*, we are told, 'So god rewardid hym for his Vnkyndenesse Seeing he refused to be King of Jer[usa]l[e]m rather to leeeve at reste & ease in his owne Contrey then for to s[er]ve the king of al Kinges in Werr[e] Vpon his enemyes Wherefore he hadde here p[er]petuell prison w[ith]out payne in Anothir Worlde'.⁴⁴ The chronicler was similarly impressed by divine judgement in his subsequent marginalia. He notes first the martyrdom of Thomas Becket, and against the entry for 1172 comments: 'A Sodayn dondre on Mydwynter nyght betokenyng of synne done'. In this year, following the *Flores Historiarum*, the Chronicle relates how thunder heard throughout the British Isles was one sign of God's anger at Henry's murder of Becket, another being his own son's rebellion.⁴⁵ King Henry's rehabilitation is reflected in the marginal comments for the next two years: 'kyng harry was assoylid in the Chapitre of Caunt[er]bury & resigned there al that S thomas deyed fore'; and for 1174, 'Kyng harry grauntid xl li of

⁴¹ BRO 04720/1, ff. 52–53; Luard, *Flores Historiarum*, vol. 2, pp. 125–6, 133.

⁴² *Kalendar*, p. 23.

⁴³ BRO 04720/1, ff. 26–28^v, 43^v.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 34; Luard, *Flores Historiarum*, vol. 2, p. 39.

⁴⁵ BRO 04720/1, f. 43^v; Luard, *Flores Historiarum*, vol. 2, p. 84.

yerely rent to the churche of Canterbury for a light to brenne there p[er]petuelly the kyng of Scott[es] then taken prysoner', where the main text states that 'and that same Saturday [as Henry's gift to Canterbury] god brought him the King of Scott[es] prisoner in to his hande'. The moral is clear: the sinful king's sincere repentance and penance is rewarded by political success.⁴⁶ The marginal comments continue to demonstrate the scribe's particular interest in Henry II and St. Thomas, with references to King Louis's pilgrimage to Canterbury in 1179 and Henry's grant of 42,500 marks towards the Crusade in 1181. There is only one further marginal note in the same hand in this part, and that is against the entry for the confirmation of the Dominican Order given (incorrectly) as 1216, and, uniquely, in Latin: '*Confirmatio Fratr[um] P[re]dicator[um]*'.⁴⁷ Given the tumultuous events of that year, the choice of this as the one to note might strike a modern reader as perverse. At the risk of assuming a simple dichotomy between caricature 'monkish' and 'secular' outlooks, this and the marginalia's emphasis on divine judgement might suggest that Part Two had been translated, along with its marginal commentary, from a copy of the *Flores Historiarum* that had been owned and annotated in a religious house, possibly a Dominican friary, and even perhaps the one located in Bristol's suburb of Broadmead.⁴⁸

In Part Three the Chronicle is organised by mayoral rather than regnal years, with the names of civic officers—*prepositi*, stewards, sheriffs and bailiffs—joining that of the mayor at the head of each year's entry. As such, it takes on the appearance of a London chronicle. This is hardly surprising, since with Part Three the chronicler turns for the bulk of his source material from the *Flores Historiarum* to one or more London chronicles. The London chronicles start their histories in 1189, with the appearance of the city's first mayor, and this part of the *Kalendar* follows the same principle, beginning with Bristol's first mayor, Adam le Page, who took office in 1217.⁴⁹ Entries

⁴⁶ BRO 04720/1, f. 44; Luard, *Flores Historiarum*, vol. 2, p. 85.

⁴⁷ BRO 04720/1, f. 58. Had the scribe translated the marginal notes from his source, but neglected this one? The confirmation of the Dominican Order is noted in some texts of the *Flores Historiarum*, and under the correct year, 1220: Luard, *Flores Historiarum*, vol. 2, p. 174.

⁴⁸ W. Page (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Gloucester*, vol. 2 (London, 1907), pp. 109–10.

⁴⁹ *Kalendar*, p. 27. Elsewhere (p. 69), the *Kalendar* claims, 'that there hath been

are sporadic in this part of the Chronicle. For the first year, 1216/7, we are given an account of Henry III's coronation at Gloucester and how 'he came to Bristowe and hilde there his grete Counseile in maner of a Parlement'.⁵⁰ In 1232/3 the death of the abbot of Keynsham is noted, but more significant, in 1239/40, is the account of the building of the new channel for the river Frome. A massive effort, giving Bristol one of the best harbours in thirteenth-century Europe, it was only accomplished through royal pressure on the township of Redcliffe to co-operate in its building. This is noted, along with the grant by St. Augustine's Abbey of land for the new channel, 'As appereth by olde wrytyng therof made bitwene the for-seid Maire and Cominaltee and the seid Abbot and Covent'.⁵¹ This, and Henry III's mandate to the men of Redcliffe, Ricart would have found readily enough among the civic archives.⁵²

There is little else of local interest, and long stretches of blank mayoral years, until the Chronicle reaches the fifteenth century. Surprisingly, the charters of 1373, which incorporated Bristol as

alweyes Maires in this worshipfull toune seth the Conquest, and byfore,': by this point, Ricart seems to have forgotten his more credible statement in the Prologue (p. 4) that, 'the first Maire [was] made and charged in this worshipful Toune of Bristowe, the first yere of the reigne of King Herry the thirde'. Examples of correspondences between the *Kalendar* and some London Chronicles are as follows (numbers in brackets refer to pages in Smith's edition or folios in the original MS. of the *Kalendar*): Gregory's Chronicle—J. Gairdner (ed.), *Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*, Camden Society, new series, 17 (1876), pp. 63, 146 (pp. 27, 38); Short English Chronicle—J. Gairdner (ed.), *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles* Camden Society, new series, 28 (1880), p. 77 (p. 43); A. H. Thomas & I. D. Thornley (eds.), *The Great Chronicle of London* (London, 1938), pp. 7, 9–13, 122–3 (ff. 61^v, 64–70^v, 38); Julius BII—C. L. Kingsford (ed.), *Chronicles of London* (Oxford, 1905), p. 5 (f. 70^v); W. D. Hamilton (ed.), *A Chronicle of England . . . by Charles Wriothesley, Windsor Herald*, vol. 1, Camden Society (1875), p. 2 (p. 48). The best account of the London chronicles remains C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1913), pp. 70–112, but see also Gransden, *Historical Writing*, II, pp. 227–48, Kennedy, *Manual of the Writings in Middle English*, 2647–56, and M.-R. McLaren, 'The aims and interests of the London chroniclers of the fifteenth century', in D. J. Clayton, R. G. Davies & P. McNiven (eds.), *Trade, Devotion and Governance: Papers in Later Medieval History* (Stroud, 1994), pp. 158–76.

⁵⁰ *Kalendar*, p. 26.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 28–9.

⁵² *GRBB*, pt. 1, pp. 89–90; F. B. Bickley (ed.), *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, 2 vols. (Bristol, 1900) [henceforth cited as *LRBB*], vol. 1, p. 22; Harding, *Bristol Charters*, pp. 18–19. Later Bristol chroniclers would use the redevelopment of the harbour, rather than Brennius's mythical foundation, as their starting point: R. Sweet, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1997), p. 77.

England's first provincial urban county, are not mentioned.⁵³ Only from the 1440s, when memory could supplement written record, does the Chronicle pick up a steady rhythm of both local and national events. Royal entries into Bristol are noted, along with some of the battles and executions of the Wars of the Roses. Among these, the assassination of the duke of Suffolk in 1450 is given, inexplicably, under the year 1452/3, but there is no mention of Cade's Rebellion or of York's demonstration at Dartford. Locally, bad weather, grain prices, the deaths of mayors in office and the loss of ships have their place, as does the occasional bit of gossip: 'This yere [1466/7] the saide William Canynges Maire shulde haue be maried, by the kyng our souerain lordes commaundement as it was saide. Wherefore the said Canynges gave vp the worlde, and in al haste toke ordirs vpon hym . . .'.⁵⁴

Part Four rehearses 'the laudable costumes of this worshipfull Towne, and . . . the eleccion, charge, rule, and demenyng of thounourable Maire, Shiref, Baillifs, and othir officers of the same Towne in thexecuting and guidyng of their said offices during their yerres'.⁵⁵ Firstly, reference is made to the building of Bristol Castle by Robert 'Consul', earl of Gloucester, to the mayors' obligation to swear the oath of office at the castle gate, and to the new arrangements instituted in 1373. There then follows a detailed account of the procedures for electing and installing mayors and other civic officers, including exempla of speeches and oaths, together with a description of the ceremonial events of the civic calendar. Frequent reference is made to *The Little Red Book*, and to some extent this part may be seen as a codification of matter found in this and other civic records, but it is possible that some of this material represents recent innovations reflecting a trend towards more 'oligarchic' government.⁵⁶ Ricart promises that Part Five will be a calendar of the charters, liberties and customs of Bristol, 'And in whate places, bokes, and levis the premises and euery of them may be founde with a wete

⁵³ But there is an illustration of Bristol's first sheriff at this point, and the charter confirming and reciting the 1373 charters is given later: see below, p. 304.

⁵⁴ *Kalendar*, pp. 40, 44.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 68–90. On the latter point, see my 'Telling tales of oligarchy in the late medieval town', in M. Hicks (ed.), *Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 177–93.

fynger'.⁵⁷ What actually constitutes this part, however, is the text of the 1373 Charter confirming and reciting the charters of that year, together with a table of the clauses of Prince John's charter of 1188. The latter was taken practically *verbatim* from *The Little Red Book*.⁵⁸

The final part opens with the reiteration of Ricart's statement in the Prologue that since, 'this worshipfull Toune of Bristowe hath alweis vsed comenly to execute his fraunchisez and libertees accordinge in semblable wise as the noble Citee of London hath vsed, and a grete parte hath take his president of the said Citee in exerciseng the same', it was fitting to include a transcript of a London customal.⁵⁹ Ricart tells us that the text is based on a book that had belonged to Henry Darcy, whom he describes as recorder of London under Edward III: Darcy was in fact mayor, not recorder, holding office in 1338/9. Most of Ricart's text is similar to the *Liber Albus*, written in 1419 by John Carpenter, common clerk of London.⁶⁰ Therefore, if Ricart is correct, he and Carpenter's common source had been written by the second quarter of the fourteenth century.

The medieval section of the *Kalendar* is illustrated by eighteen drawings and miniatures.⁶¹ Thirteen of these depict kings, mostly shown in half-page drawings, and placed at the beginning of the Chronicle's account of that king's reign, or of the first mayoral year of the reign. The others depict the plan of Bristol at its foundation, the mayor-making ceremony, Bristol's first sheriff, and the Annunciation and the Adoration of the Holy Infant. This last appears immediately above the invocation at the beginning of the text. The plan shows the town contained within its walls, dominated by the central High

⁵⁷ *Kalendar*, p. 5.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 90–2. *LRBB*, vol. 1, p. 22. For the 1373 charters, see Harding, *Bristol Charters*, pp. 118–73.

⁵⁹ *Kalendar*, pp. 5–6, 93.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6; R. R. Sharpe (ed.), *Calendar of the Letter Books of the City of London: Letter Book F* (London, 1904), p. 285; H. T. Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber Albus, Liber Custumarum et Liber Horn*, pt. 2 (Rolls Series, London, 1860); T. Brewer, *Memoir of the Life and Times of John Carpenter, Town Clerk of London in the Reign of Henry V and Henry VI, and Founder of the City of London School* (London, 1856), pp. 17–22.

⁶¹ This and the next paragraph are based on K. L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts, 1390–1490*, vol. 2 (London, 1996), pp. 348–50. There are further illustrations in the post-medieval continuations. Some of the medieval mayors have the arms attributed to them emblazoned on shields next to their names e.g. Walter Frampton, 1357/8 (f. 96), William Canynges, 1372/3 (f. 99^v), Philip Mede, 1458/9 (f. 122^v), but these appear to have been added at a much later date.

Cross, commemorating the 1373 charter, from which radiate the four principle roads.⁶² The street pattern therefore forms a cross, and the symbolism is probably deliberate: despite being depicted as imagined at the time of its foundation, centuries before the Incarnation, Bristol is a Christian town. The town walls also have their symbolic importance, suggesting that Bristol is self-contained and independent of outside authority. This message may also have been conveyed by what was left out. While the containment of the town within its walls helps to create a strong and compact visual image, it also excludes certain features with which contemporary Bristolians would have been very familiar. These include the abbey of St. Augustine's, to the north-west of the town walls, and the suburb of Redcliffe and Temple, south of the Avon. Both of these, at various times, represented separate—sometimes rival—jurisdictions to that exercised by the mayor and common council of Bristol.⁶³ Another feature that would have dominated the topography of fifteenth-century Bristol was the castle, to the east. This is perhaps suggested in the plan by some towers at the far side of town, but the real thing would have been much more obvious. The castle was largely deserted and in disrepair by the late 1470s, but doubtless still impressive.⁶⁴ More to the point, perhaps, it represented an earlier phase in Bristol's history, before the granting of the 1373 Charter, when the town's lack of autonomy was symbolised every September as the new mayor appeared at the castle gate to swear his oath of office. The depictions of the mayor-making ceremony, where the new mayor swears his oath not to the castle constable but to the outgoing mayor (immediately preceding Part Four's textual representation of the same event), and that of John Vyell, the first Bristol sheriff (placed under the year 1373 in the Chronicle, and marking the grant of the charter which created Bristol's shrievalty), impress upon us that Bristol is now enjoying its new dispensation as an incorporated, independent county-borough.

The artist of the Annunciation and Adoration scene was probably responsible for two other illustrations, both of them full-page: the

⁶² For the plan, see E. Ralph, 'Bristol, circa 1480', in R. A. Skelton, P. D. A. Harvey (eds.), *Local Maps and Plans from Medieval England* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 309–16.

⁶³ See my 'Sanctuary and authority in Pre-Reformation Bristol', in J. H. Bettey (ed.), *Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol: Essays in Memory of Elizabeth Ralph, 1911–2000* (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2001), pp. 73–84.

⁶⁴ Neale, *Topography*, pp. 222/3, 238/9–40/1.

first depicts William the Conqueror, and opens Part Two; the second shows Henry III's coronation by a cardinal. The prominence given to the Conqueror is readily explicable; that given to Henry III is less so. Perhaps the significant point here is that Henry held a great council at Bristol soon after his coronation. The artist employed for these illustrations was a professional, but not of the first order. He may have been employed in the same workshop as the artist responsible for the pictures of Arthur, Stephen, Henry II, Richard I and John, who displays similar technique and skill. This second artist may also have executed the plan of Bristol. This pair may have been local, but the three artists who depicted Edward I, Edward II, Richard II, Bristol's first sheriff and the mayor-making were of superior competence and probably based in London. The mayor-making has strong similarities with the illustrations of the four central courts of law, now in the Inner Temple Library, but was probably not by the same artist. Finally, the miniature of Henry VI appears to have been the work of an enterprising amateur.⁶⁵ The probable involvement of London artists in illustrations integral to the text suggests either that these men were peripatetic, or that quires were sent off to London for illustration. Their work is contained within a few folios (folios 74, 83; 100, 101 and 152) and so it is conceivable that the relevant quires were despatched to a London workshop for adornment before the volume was bound. The choice of kings to be portrayed appears somewhat idiosyncratic. Half-page spaces have been left at the beginning of the accounts of some reigns (such as Henry IV, Edward IV and Henry VII), indicating that an illustration was intended, but no space was left for a portrait of Richard III, and indeed, the heading for that king's reign is rather cramped, as though it had been an afterthought.

Turning from the book to its author: in his Prologue Ricart draws a distinction between conception and execution. The idea for the *Kalendar* came from Mayor William Spencer, '*et omnium discretorum virorum dicti majoris consultorum*'; Ricart's role was to 'devise, ordeigne, and make' the book.⁶⁶ A third party must be added: the scribe, or

⁶⁵ It shows him with a sceptre and a down-turned sword: is there some significance in the latter detail?

⁶⁶ *Kalendar*, pp. 1, 3.

rather scribes, since a comparison of the hands in the *Kalendar* with Ricart's signed contributions to *The Great Red Book* shows that they are not identical.⁶⁷

Of Robert Ricart's life we know very little.⁶⁸ Any attempt at a biography is hampered by the probable existence of at least two Robert Ricarts—or Ricards—in Bristol in the second half of the fifteenth century. Almost certainly, it is Robert Ricart the town clerk who acted in 1482 as an attorney to deliver seisin of the goods of William Canynges, since his fellow attorney was Thomas Harding, who by 1497 had replaced him as town clerk, and the recipients of the goods were Robert Strange, mayor, John Twynho, recorder, and William Spencer (the former mayor) and William Byrde, both aldermen of Bristol.⁶⁹ This is our one reasonably firm anchorage in a sea of conjecture. A Robert Ricard, whitetawyer, of Lewins Mead, died in 1503/4, leaving a widow, Joan, who then married one of his former associates, John Bailey, and was herself dead by 1513. If this is the same man as Robert Ricardes, merchant, who was in business with Philip Mede in the 1450s, then he would have been at least 70 at his death, leaving a widow young enough for perhaps another ten years of married life.⁷⁰ So, Robert Ricardes the merchant and Robert Ricard the whitetawyer are unlikely to have been identical, and it is the merchant who seems the best candidate as the author of the *Kalendar*: he was associated with Mede, who was mayor in 1458/9, 1461/2, and 1468/9, while Ricard the whitetawyer has left no evidence that he moved in elite circles, and his will suggests that he was not a man of great means. Finally, the death of the previous town clerk is the most likely reason for Harding's

⁶⁷ Smith believed them to be, and suggested on the basis of her handwriting analysis that Ricart was still working on the *Kalendar* as late as 1508, but after scrutinising the MSS. I am unconvinced: *Kalendar*, pp. iii–iv. Ricart's signature appears on ff. 28 and 29 of *GRBB*.

⁶⁸ In addition to Smith's (*Kalendar*, pp. i–viii), accounts of Ricart are given by I. Gray, *Antiquaries of Gloucester and Bristol* (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1981), pp. 34–5, and *The Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 48, p. 97, but both are heavily dependent on Smith. Dr Clive Burgess has written the article on Ricart for *The New Dictionary of National Biography* (forthcoming).

⁶⁹ *CCR*, 1476–1485, n. 971. For Harding as Ricart's replacement, see PRO Early Chancery Proceedings C1/217/20, in which he is described as town clerk in 1497. He is also so described in C1/178/45–7, dated to 1486–93 or 1504–15.

⁷⁰ PRO PROB 11/14/55; BRO 26166/63, a–b; 26166/305; AC/D15/18, 20; *GRBB*, pt. 2, pp. 23, 130–2.

occupancy of the clerkship in the 1490s, in which case the whitetawyer is obviously debarred.⁷¹

William Spencer's biography is a much easier proposition. A prominent Bristol merchant, he was a member of the common council from at least 1450, sheriff in 1461/2, after having been nominated for the previous six years, constable of the staple in Bristol from 1479 to 1483, mayor of Bristol in 1465/6, 1473/4, and 1478/9, and MP in 1467/8. He also sat on numerous commissions in Bristol and Somerset. He was a considerable benefactor to the local poor and the church, and died in 1494.⁷²

While Ricart is undoubtedly an obscure figure next to Mayor Spencer, he was no lightweight. Assuming that he did the work of identifying, collecting and ordering, even if not actually transcribing, the material for the *Kalendar*, he must have possessed a good working knowledge of Latin and French. As well as exploring Bristol's civic archive (well within the capabilities of the town clerk, one would hope), he had access to chronicles or related materials from the abbeys of Glastonbury, Tewkesbury, and possibly St. Augustine's (if not here, then Berkeley Castle), along with a *Brut*, at least one London chronicle, and a copy of *Flores Historiarum*. These last three could all have come from London, along with the customal copied into Part Six. The use of London artists for the illustrations might also have necessitated trips to the metropolis. Spencer could have been of assistance here, since he was no stranger to the city. He was associated with London merchants, while his friendship with William Canynges, witnessed above all by his activities as executor to Canynges's will, may have extended to William's brother Thomas, a London grocer and alderman.⁷³ Dr Clive Burgess has suggested that William Canyn-

⁷¹ Admittedly, identifying our author with the merchant active in the 1450s does leave us with the problem of accounting for twenty years in which his doings go unrecorded (although he could have been the Robert Ricardes who witnessed a deed in Gloucestershire in 1461; *CCR*, 1461–1468, pp. 75–6); there could, therefore, have been a *third* Robert Ricart, but that way madness lies!

⁷² J. C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Biographies of the Members of the Commons House, 1439–1509* (London, 1936), p. 787; *GRBB*, pts. 1–4, *passim*; *LRBB*, vol. 1, p. 248, vol. 2, pp. 128, 197, 199; *CPR*, 1461–1467, pp. 529–30, 540; 1467–1477, p. 399; *CFR*, 1452–1461, pp. 140, 176, 200, 226, 266–7, 284; 1461–1471, pp. 10, 11, 237, 240; 1471–1485, nn. 452, 520, 636, 691, 727, 769. His will, PRO PROB 11/10/7, while voluminous and detailed in its funerary and commemorative arrangements, makes no record, alas, of chronicles, the *Kalendar*, or Ricart.

⁷³ For Spencer's links with London merchants, see *CCR*, 1468–1476, n. 1280;

ges's close association with John Carpenter, bishop of Worcestre, and the latter's friendship with his namesake, the author of the *Liber Albus*, may have provided the route through which a version of this work came into Ricart's hands.⁷⁴ The Canynges connection may also have allowed Ricart to avail himself of the services of Richard Vowell of Wells, William Worcestre's bibliographic sleuth, since William Canynges's son and namesake had married Isabel, the sister of Richard Vowell, master of Wells, by 1454.⁷⁵

The production of the *Kalendar* does not seem to have been a straightforward task. The plan laid out in the Prologue is not always followed. Part Two was supposed to show how, 'this worshipfull Toun hath be enlarged, fraunchised, and corporated, by whate kinges daies, and by whoos sute and coste. The laboure, peyne, and travaille of the saide sewtours Almighty God rewarde them in hevyn, for al we ar bounde to pray for the same'.⁷⁶ As we have seen, however, with few exceptions this section of the Chronicle is not specific to Bristol, and nor is the promise of Part Five fulfilled. Did Ricart simply baulk at the task he had set himself after realising how much work it would entail? Or was he frustrated by the inadequacies of the Bristol civic archive, even though it was one of the most comprehensive and well-ordered among English provincial towns? Or does the programme set out in the Prologue represent what Mayor Spencer wanted, faithfully recorded by Ricart, who nonetheless had other ideas about how the book should proceed? Had this programme been executed as originally intended, it would have provided an unbroken connection between the Bristol of Ricart and Spencer's own time and the town at its mythical foundation, its history running

1476–1485, n. 971. For his contacts with Canynges, see T. P. Wadley, *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills contained in the Great Orphan Book of Wills* (Bristol, 1886), p. 153; J. Sherborne, *William Canynges, 1402–1474* (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 1985), p. 28, and *GRBB*, pt. 2, p. 116; pt. 3, pp. 150–1. For Thomas Canynges, see Sherborne, *William Canynges*, pp. 5, 7, 27–8, and Sharpe, *Calendar of Letter Books: Letter Book I*, *passim*.

⁷⁴ Sherborne, *William Canynges*, pp. 19–23; Brewer, *John Carpenter*, pp. 60–1, 137.

⁷⁵ Sherborne, *William Canynges*, p. 27; *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, 18 (1926), pp. 10–12.

⁷⁶ *Kalendar*, p. 4. The motive here is strikingly similar to that which prompted the All Saints' churchwardens to produce their church book in 1469, 'to put in names of the good doers and the names of the wardens of the church and what good they did in their days that they must yearly be prayed for': C. Burgess (ed.), *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints', Bristol: Part I*, Bristol Record Society, vol. 46 (1995), p. 10.

parallel to and intertwined with that of the realm. Along the way, its benefactors would have been remembered, in a sort of civic bede-roll.

To what end was all this effort expended? Ricart gives us one answer. In his Prologue, after declaring that,

this noble and worshipfull Toune off Bristowe is . . . founded and grounded upon fraunchises, libertees, and free auncient customes, and not vpon comen lawe, as it is affermed and ratefied bi oure olde chartres, in as free and semblable wise as is the Citee of London . . . as tyme oute of mynde it hath be graunted bi the noble progenitours of oure moost dradde souveraigne lorde the kinge, and by his good grace confermed vnto the saide worshipfull Toune in so large wise, that for to shewe or express it in certeyn it passith mannes mynde to remembre it

he goes on to explain how Mayor Spencer had commissioned the work, 'in maynteyneng of the said fraunchises hereafter more duely and freely to be executed and excercised, and the perfaitter had in remembraunce'.⁷⁷ In other words, this is most certainly not a work inspired merely by antiquarian interest in the past. Rather, it is a practical guide by which civic officers might more effectively defend their town's liberties in the future. Such aspirations have inspired diligent town clerks and chamberlains down the centuries to compile civic customals and indeed, Ricart had one such work to hand, for William de Colford had done so for Bristol in 1344.⁷⁸ For Ricart—and Spencer—the future defence of interests depended on an awareness and understanding of the past:

For asmoche as it is righte convenient and accordinge to euery Bourgeois of the Towne of Bristowe, in especiall thoo that been men of worship, for to knowe and vnderstande the begynnyng and first foundation of the saide worshipfull Toune.⁷⁹

The *Kalendar* continued to serve as a register of events until 1698, when the last Chronicle entry was made. Its continuing utility to generations of Bristol's governing elite is also shown by the marginal

⁷⁷ *Kalendar*, pp. 2–3. In 1419 John Carpenter, like Ricart, had been commissioned by his mayor to record his town's customs, lest their memory be lost to subsequent generations: Riley, *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, pp. 3–4.

⁷⁸ *LRBB*, pt. 1, pp. 24–44. For later customals—and town histories—see Sweet, *Writing of Urban Histories*, *passim*, and R. Tittler, *Townpeople and Nation: English Urban Experiences, 1540–1640* (Stanford, Cal., 2001), pp. 121–39.

⁷⁹ *Kalendar*, p. 8.

annotations and '*Index contentorum in hoc libro*' added by Robert Saxcy, mayor in 1556/7.⁸⁰

So, as well as providing a set of precedents for civic procedures and for the defence of the town's liberties, the *Kalendar* was also a repository of tradition which, while too vague to constitute legal evidence, nonetheless added weight to Bristol's communal identity and standing relative to other jurisdictions.⁸¹ There were several ways in which tradition could be deployed in support of civic liberties. In 1534 Mayor William Shipman prefaced a Star Chamber petition brought on behalf of Bristol with the reminder that, 'youre saide townen is a auntyent Borowe & Portte', whose customs and liberties had existed, 'tyme oute of memorie & [had been] Confirmed by dyv[er]s youre noble progenytours'.⁸² More graphically, visiting kings could find themselves face-to-face with a town's immemorial rights, as personified by its founder. Thus, Henry VII's first entry to Bristol in 1486 was the occasion for a pageant involving Brennius, who greeted Henry as his 'most dear cousin', and then bemoaned the poverty into which the town had fallen since his time; the obvious subtext was not lost on Henry, who proceeded to negotiations about relief from subsidy.⁸³

⁸⁰ BRO 04720/1, f. 328, 'Shaxey' has been written by the side of this index. What Saxcy found worthy of indexing in the pre-1478/9 sections of the Chronicle were the harbour improvements of 1240, the illustration of the first sheriff next to the year 1373, and the episode in 1455/6 when disobedient burgesses were punished (see below, p. 315); he also notes two entries which had been inserted into the original text at a later date, concerning the building (in 1293/4), and rebuilding (in 1375/6) of St. Mary Redcliffe. The *Kalendar* was seen by John Leland (L. T. Smith (ed.), *The Itinerary of John Leland*, pt. 10 (1910), pp. 91–2), and was a major source for most subsequent Bristol chronicles, of which there may have been as many as 50: A. E. Hudd, 'Two Bristol Calendars', *TBGAS*, 19 (1894/5), pp. 105–41. Entries for years after 1478/9 were probably made in or soon after the year in question: the original text for 1483/4 makes no mention of the Princes in the Tower, but a marginal note, in a fifteenth-century hand but doubtless added after 22 August 1485, records, 'And this yere the two sonnes of King E. were put to scylenge in the Towre of London' (*Kalendar*, p. 46).

⁸¹ For a concise statement of this function in relation to civic histories and customs in general, see Sweet, *Writing of Urban Histories*, p. 76.

⁸² PRO STAC 2/6/93.

⁸³ For this, and the Brennius legend in general, see Sacks, *Widening Gate*, pp. 178–9 and nn. 32–3. Statues of Brennius and his brother Bellinus still stand either side of the gateway of St. John's Church, built over Bristol's first town wall. While much repaired, they may be of early Tudor origin, and in their situation and symbolism are reminiscent of the paintings of Sir Bevis and Ascupart that adorned Southampton's Barge in the early sixteenth century: see D. M. Palliser (ed.), *The*

Such uses of history were common in later medieval and early modern towns. In 1478/9 however, there may have been more particular reasons why Mayor Spencer wanted to have his version of history established as definitive. In 1471 Bristol had found itself on the wrong side in the closing stages of the Readeption. As early as 1469, Bristol's sympathy for Edward IV's enemies was becoming apparent. After William Lord Herbert's defeat at Edgecote, his brother, Sir Thomas Herbert, was brought to Bristol and executed; later that year Bristol gave assistance to Warwick and Clarence as they fled from Edward's wrath into temporary exile. In March 1470 Philip Mede and John Shipward probably led a contingent of Bristol men to fight for Lord Berkeley at the battle of Nibley Green. The town's loyalties were clearly demonstrated in April 1471 when it gave substantial assistance, with both money, supplies, artillery and men, to Margaret of Anjou's army on its way to defeat at Tewkesbury.⁸⁴ For this miscalculation, Bristol had to buy a pardon, which was granted eight days after the battle. Some leading Bristolians were exempted, presumably because they had been leaders of Bristol's Lancastrian faction. Among them was the former recorder, Nicholas Hervey, who seems to have led the Bristol contingent to Tewkesbury, where he was slain.

The record of these tumultuous events in the *Kalendar* is terse in the extreme. Under 1468/9 we are told that after Edgecote, 'one of

Cambridge Urban History of Britain, Volume I, 600–1540 (Cambridge, 2000), p. 340 & Plate 5. For the importance of foundation myths in civic ideology, see G. Rosser, 'Myth, image and social process in the English medieval town', *Urban History*, 23 (1996), pp. 5–25. In 1461 it had been William the Conqueror who received Edward IV: F. J. Furnival (ed.), *Political, Religious and Love Poems from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lambeth MS. No. 306 and Other Sources*, Early English Text Society, original series, 15 (1866), pp. 5–6. The Conqueror was given the unique distinction of a full-page portrait in the *Kalendar*, so he surely had some particular significance to the Bristol elite. Was it his association with Robert, earl of Gloucester? Perhaps his ousting by Brennius in 1486 owed something to the renewed currency that the *Kalendar* had given to Bristol's foundation legend.

⁸⁴ *Kalendar*, p. 44. J. O. Halliwell (ed.), *A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of King Edward the Fourth by John Warkworth, D. D.*, Camden Society (1839), p. 7. J. Bruce (ed.), *Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV. In England and the Final Recouerye of his Kingdomes from Henry VI. A.D. M.CCCC.LXXI*, Camden Society (1838), pp. 25–6, both reprinted, with original pagination, and introduction by K. Dockray, in *Three Chronicles of the Reign of Edward IV* (Gloucester, 1988); P. W. Hammond, *The Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury* (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 17, 84, 86–7; J. H. Cooke, 'The great Berkeley law-suit of the 15th and 16th centuries. A chapter of Gloucestershire history', *TBGAS*, 3 (1878–9), pp. 305–24, at 313–7.

the lorde Herbert his brothirn was slayne at Bristowe the same yere at Seynt James tide'. There is no mention of Nibley Green in the entry for 1469/70, simply the record that Clarence and Warwick, 'came ayen in to Englonde with grete pouer, reryng al the West contray, and came to London, and made Kynge Edward to voyde the lande in to Flaundres'. The following year's entry is even more telling: 'And the same time londid in Devon Quene Marget with Edward hir son, gedering grete people came to Bristowe, and met with kyng Edward at Teuxbury, where the Kyng had the fiede'. There are no further entries until 1474/5, when 'cam kyng Edward that noble prynce to Bristowe, and lodged in the Abbey of Seynt Austyns. And the same tyme he had of thenhabitauntz of this Towne and of the contreyes adioynning a grete benivolence of money gyven hym, to the sustentacion of his werres'. Bristol's part in the politics of 1469 to 1471 is afforded as minimal a treatment as possible without breaking the bounds of credibility, given the notoriety of these events. In 1475, on the other hand, we are given a relatively fulsome description of Bristol's loyalty and willingness to make sacrifices in the Yorkist national interest; in reality, given the town's recent record, it was hardly in a position to refuse.⁸⁵

Bristol's governing elite had every right to be sensitive about their actions during the Readeption. None more so, perhaps, than William Spencer. He was among those exempted from the pardon of 1471, along with his fellow common-councillors John Shipward and Robert Strange. In or soon after May 1471 Shipward was arrested and his property confiscated. His incarceration lasted until September, when he bought a pardon. But two months later he and Spencer were bound in £100 to appear before the king and council. Their answers were presumably satisfactory, since Spencer received his pardon in December.⁸⁶ Strange, Shipward and Spencer were unable to shake off the slur left by their actions during the Readeption. According to *Adams's Chronicle of Bristol*, in 1479 Robert Strange was accused of coining money to send to the exiled Henry Tudor. The accusation was found to be malicious, and his accuser suffered a traitor's death for bringing a false appeal of treason.⁸⁷ On 12 March 1479 Thomas

⁸⁵ *Kalendar*, pp. 44–5.

⁸⁶ *LRBB*, pt. 2, pp. 130–2. *CCR, 1468–1476*, n. 843. See also the arrest, seizure of goods and pardon of John Shepherd, 5 September 1471: *LRBB*, pt. 2, pp. 131–2.

⁸⁷ F. F. Fox (ed.), *Adams's Chronicle of Bristol* (Bristol, 1910), p. 73. This is an early

Norton, royal customer of Bristol, entered the mayor's court and accused William Spencer to his face of having been a traitor to Edward IV. The precise nature of Norton's accusation is not recorded, but one of his associates claimed that Spencer illegally withheld goods worth £700 which had been the property of Warwick and Clarence, and which Norton had been commissioned to confiscate. In turn, Norton was alleged to have used his commission to terrorise John Shipward, his father-in-law. Spencer, we are told, responded to Norton's accusation by standing down from his office and presenting himself to the sheriff to be held in the town gaol until the case could be tried before the king. This was done, the king found in Spencer's favour, and the mayor resumed his office. The recorder, John Twynho, was ordered to punish Norton as he saw fit.⁸⁸

The Norton case was recorded in great detail in the *Great Red Book*: it runs to fifteen folios. No other dispute is reported at such length.⁸⁹ The record was made by the recorder soon after Michaelmas 1479.⁹⁰ The opening paragraph makes clear that this was done in order to exonerate Spencer:

Here followeth a remembraunce Nevir to be put in oblyvion but to be hadde in perpetuell memory of all trewe Burgeises and lovers of the Towne of Bristowe of the Innaturall demeanyng and the Inordinate behavyng of Thomas Norton of Bristowe Gentleman against the noble famouse and trewe merchaunte William Spencer beinge the thirde tyme Maire of the Towne of Bristowe bifore saide.⁹¹

While Spencer's term of office had ended by the time Twynho wrote his account, he remained a prominent member of common council, and so he is likely to have been involved in the decision to have his case recorded at such great length; in fact, it is reasonable to assume that he was the prime mover.

17th-century chronicle, but the incident seems entirely in keeping with events in 1470s' Bristol.

⁸⁸ *GRBB*, pt. 4, pp. 57–8, 69–70, 81–2.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 57–93. Significantly, the most comparable example follows immediately after this one, and concerns an allegation made in 1482 that William Bird (Spencer's close associate), was of servile birth: *ibid.*, pp. 93–6. Spencer was supervisor of Bird's will: *ibid.*, pt. 3, p. 154.

⁹⁰ In the final paragraph of this section, Twynho notes how Norton had, by Michaelmas, still not appeared in Bristol to face justice: *ibid.*, pt. 4, p. 93.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Spencer was a man naturally concerned with his reputation, particularly in view of his—to Yorkist eyes—shady political past.⁹² When Thomas Norton marched into his courthouse in March 1479 he was made to appreciate the dangers of a past unexorcised. He may have hoped that the ghosts could be laid to rest through the writing of history. What would be presented to future generations of Bristol's governors in the pages of the *Great Red Book* was the story of an exemplary mayor's triumph over a malicious slanderer.

If Spencer was unaware of the political dangers and possibilities of history when he commissioned the *Kalendar* in the winter of 1478/9, he very soon would be. The *Kalendar* was begun at least eight days before Norton's accusation was made, so there is no way in which the accusation can be said to have prompted Spencer's commissioning of the work. But the researching, compilation and transcription of the *Kalendar* must have taken several months, and by the time of writing the Chronicle entries for the fifteenth century the Norton affair may well have been a recent and painful memory. Whether or not we can read these sections of the Chronicle as reflecting one man's personal anxieties, there is little doubt that they are not an innocent, impartial record. For example, the entry for 1455/6 recounts the defeat of a group of Bristol burgesses of Irish extraction, led by Henry May, who had brought a Chancery suit against the mayor—John Shipward—and common council, 'for the whiche he and al his fellowes were discomenyd of theyre freedom, til they bought it ayen with the blodde of theyre purses, and with weping Ien, knelyng on their knees, besought the Maire and his brothern of their grace'. The story made a big impression on subsequent generations of Bristol's elite, but the *Kalendar's* record once again conceals an alternative version of events which was altogether less flattering to the mayor and common council.⁹³ The rhetorical

⁹² He further enhanced his reputation in 1492 by his involvement in the creation of a charitable trust for civic purposes, and in 1493 by his endowment of three priests to preach before the mayor and common council in St. Mary Redcliffe, both acts comprehensively recorded in the civic archives: *ibid.*, pp. 101–6.

⁹³ *Kalendar*, p. 41. This was one of the few events from the Chronicle indexed by Robert Saxcy (see above, n. 80), and appears in *Adams's Chronicle of Bristol*, p. 68. For a discussion of the rhetorical purpose of this and other sections of Bristol's civic archive, see my, 'Telling tales of oligarchy in the late medieval town', and 'Conflict and urban government in later medieval England: St. Augustine's Abbey and Bristol', *Urban History*, 27 (2000), pp. 325–43, at 340–3.

presentation of history in the *Kalendar* continued to be practised after the deaths of Spencer and (probably) Ricart. Bristol's next moment of decision in the face of an approaching army came in 1497, provided by the Cornish rebels, fresh from their forced entry into Wells. In marked contrast to the evasive account of 1471, the *Kalendar* dwells on Bristol's courageous defiance: 'But the Maire sent them worde that they shuld come no nere, and if they wold come ner, at their oune aduentur'; thus admonished, and deterred by the town's show of strength, the rebels marched away.⁹⁴

The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar represents a considerable investment of time, money and intellectual effort. Its conception was unusually ambitious, but its execution betrays something of the limits of provincial urban culture: when all is said and done, its Chronicle is pretty poor stuff when compared to the average monastic or London chronicle, to both of which *genres* it was heavily indebted, and Ricart—or Spencer—had no illusions about Bristol's subordinate relationship with the metropolis. Nevertheless, this is still the product of a prosperous, sophisticated and self-conscious urban community, one that might be expected to have been at ease with itself and its world.⁹⁵ But it wasn't, and its governing elite sought to deal with their less comfortable memories by attempting to write them out of history. The authorised version, bequeathed to posterity, would, they hoped, drive out any variant readings that might have lingered in the collective memory. One is tempted to say, glibly, that the truth will out, but it probably did not in Bristol, at least not for as long as was necessary.⁹⁶ 'Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past', wrote Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty Four*, and William Spencer would probably have agreed.

⁹⁴ *Kalendar*, pp. 48–9. This entry takes up 15 lines in Smith's edition.

⁹⁵ For Bristol's relative prosperity in the 1470s, see Sacks, *Widening Gate*, pp. 22–3.

⁹⁶ The events of 1469 to 1471 are not noted in Saxcy's index, and nor do they appear in *Adams's Chronicle of Bristol*.

RETHINKING HENRY VII: THE MAN AND HIS PIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE OBSERVANT FRANCISCANS

Virginia K. Henderson

Henry VII has been portrayed in scholarly and popular literature in ways that range from a “thin, crafty-eyed, avaricious,” and secretive character or a consummately manipulative and self-serving one to a wise, amiable, and sometimes compassionate man capable of liberality, kindness, and gestures of mercy.¹ He has been characterized too, both as a deeply religious man and as one markedly disinterested in religious matters.² “His soul [was] not too heavenward in its affections,” so one nineteenth-century writer declared, conceiving of the king as riddled with guilt and driven by superstition, while another found him “alarmed by ‘compunctious visitings’ of a guilty conscience.”³ Indeed, so great were “his guilty Fears,” so still another

¹ R. L. Storey, for instance, who obviously preferred Torrigiano's posthumous bust of Henry VII (*Victoria & Albert Museum, London*), saw a “mean, crafty face” in Sittow's unidealized image of the king painted in 1505 (*National Portrait Gallery, London*). A. F. Pollard, *The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources* (London, 1913; New York, 1967), I: viii, xiv, xxvii; James Gairdner, *Memorials of King Henry the Seventh*, ed. James Gairdner, *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland During the Middle Ages*, vol. 10 (London, 1858), 216–17; Sydney Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (London, 1992), 3; S. B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (Berkeley, 1972), 318; Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Man of Letters* (Oxford, 1952), 145; Bernard André, *Historia Regis Henrici Septimi a Bernardo Andrea Tholosate*, in *Memorials of King Henry the Seventh*, ed. James Gairdner, *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland During the Middle Ages*, vol. 10 (London, 1858), passim; John Fisher, *Hereafter foloweth a mornyng remembraunce had at the moneth mynde of the noble prynces Margarete countesse of Rychemonde & Darbye . . .*, in *The English Works of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester*, ed. John E. B. Mayor, Early English Text Society, e.s., vol. 27 (London, 1876; repr. Bungay, England, 1935), 269–70; R. L. Storey, *The Reign of Henry VII* (London, 1968), 62.

² Storey, *The Reign of Henry VI*, 63; Michael Van Cleve Alexander, *The First Tudors: A Study of Henry VII and His Reign* (Totowa, NJ, 1980), 195; G. R. Elton, “Henry VII: Rapacity and Remorse,” *The Historical Journal* 1 (1958): 38; David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 2, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge, 1959), 3; Brian Vickers, ed., *The History of ‘The Reign of Henry VII’ and Selected Works* (Cambridge, 1998), 203; Gairdner, *Memorials of King Henry the Seventh*, 218.

³ Bacon spoke of Henry VII's “great remorse” at the end of his life and mentioned his conscience, but considered him a religious man. The nineteenth-century

wrote, that ultimately they “subdued even his avarice,”⁴ an issue in itself, of course, that has given rise to great debate.⁵ What kind of man, then, was Henry VII? Despite, or perhaps because of, these and other images of the king that have been constructed over the centuries, a sound grasp of his character and personality—a sense of the “real man,” to use the words of S. B. Chrimes—continues to elude historians. When he wrote about Henry VII more than thirty years ago, Chrimes reported that there was surprisingly little concerning the personal nature of the king in the records of his reign and certainly little that clearly revealed his personality.⁶ Undoubtedly, the lack of specific evidence has enabled the extremes and often-fanciful assertions of many interpretations, which more often than not reflect the interests and issues of the period in which they were written rather than a reasoned portrait of the king.

The documents, however, do reveal more about Henry VII than Chrimes supposed. In the course of my research on the artistic and architectural projects undertaken during his reign, I have encountered both textual and visual documents that directly or indirectly provide glimpses of, and further insight into, the private man and personal interests of Henry VII. In some instances, my sources are different from those searched by historians, whose primary concern has been centered on political affairs, while in others, my reading of the material has been different because of the focus of my work. In an effort to shed light on what traditionally has been a difficult and hazy subject, this essay will present the information and impressions about the man that I have garnered from these various sources during my investigation of the artistic patronage of Henry VII.

The notions of avarice, guilt, feigned piety, and political shrewdness have colored many an attempt to characterize Henry VII, both

writers may have derived their ideas from Bacon, but they altered and exaggerated them to accord with contemporary perceptions of religion and especially medieval religious practices. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, 3d rev. ed. (London, 1869), 1: 194; Edward Wedlake Brayley, *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster . . .* (London, 1818–23), 2: 4.

⁴ Note written by Craven Ord in his transcription of the accounts of Henry VII, c. 1800, BL Add. MS 7099, f. 131v. Thomas Astle expressed the same idea in the preface to his transcription of Henry VII's will; Thomas Astle, *The Will of Henry VII* (London, 1775), iv, viij.

⁵ Elton, “Rapacity and Remorse,” 21–39; J. P. Cooper, “Henry VII's Last Years Reconsidered,” *The Historical Journal* 2 (1959): 103–29.

⁶ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 298, 317.

in the past and surprisingly more recently, and thus have helped to perpetuate the image of a crafty and avaricious king. At the same time, they have led to misconceptions about the Lady Chapel that Henry VII built at Westminster Abbey, as well as about other imagery from his reign, which scholars have used, in turn, to support their characterizations of the king.⁷ Opinions regarding the sincerity of the piety of Henry VII have varied widely too, but often they appear to have been influenced less by sound evidence than by the attitudes toward the Church, clergy, and religion that prevailed at the time they were formed. It is largely on that very important point, however—that is, the depth and sincerity of his religious conviction or lack thereof—that a more reliable grasp of the character and personality of Henry VII depends, and it is primarily that issue which my findings address.

Chrimes considered the description of Henry VII that Polydore Vergil completed shortly after the death of the king to be “the fullest and on the whole probably the most reliable” one available. Yet, even though he quoted it at length in his biography and readily acknowledged that Henry VII was reputed to have been a sound churchman, Chrimes chose not to accept Vergil’s statements concerning the king’s devotional habits. He turned instead to the mid-twentieth-century work of David Knowles, as others have done, to assess the piety of the king.⁸ Whether in truth, as topos, or for eulogistic effect, Vergil reported that Henry VII was “the most ardent supporter of our faith” and someone who “daily participated with great piety in religious services,”⁹ but the stance of Knowles was

⁷ The post-medieval name given to the chapel, that is, the Chapel of Henry VII, in itself has misled many, who seem to have been unaware of its original dedication to the Virgin. John Britton, *The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain, Represented and Illustrated in a Series of Views, Elevations, Plans, Sections, and Details of Various Ancient English Edifices* . . . (London, 1807–12), 2: 12; Sydney Anglo, “Henry VII’s Dynastic Hieroglyphs,” *The Historian*, 10 (1976), 8; item, “Ill of the Dead: The Posthumous Reputation of Henry VII,” *Renaissance Studies* 1 (1987), 27–47; John N. King, *Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in an Age of Religious Crisis* (Princeton, 1989), 29, 40, 41; Gordon Kipling, *The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance* (Leiden, 1977), 7; Neil Beckett, “Henry VII and Sheen Charterhouse,” in *The Reign of Henry VII: Proceedings of the 1993 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Benjamin Thompson (Stamford, England, 1995), 131.

⁸ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 298–99, 304.

⁹ Polydore Vergil, *The ‘Anglica historia’ of Polydore Vergil A.D. 1485–1537*, ed. Denys Hay, Camden Series, vol. 74 (London, 1950), 147.

quite the opposite. According to him, Henry VII "was not personally interested in religion in its theological or devotional aspects, still less in its spiritual depth . . . His actions and policies, as we see them, were earthbound."¹⁰ Both Anthony Goodman and John A. F. Thomson acknowledged the importance of pious devotions and the Church to Henry VII, but they did so with an eye to their value as components in the political image of the king, rather than as an indication of his personal spiritual involvement.¹¹

In contrast, the evidence I have found suggests that Henry VII took his religious devotions seriously, as Vergil indicated, and that he was strongly influenced in his beliefs by his experiences and upbringing abroad. Moreover, probably because of the unique circumstances of his youth spent in exile and its ramifications, he appears to have conceived of himself and his reign as divinely ordained in the tradition of sacred kingship, however convenient that might appear now from a modern perspective. These findings call into question, in turn, the readings of certain of his efforts as politically manipulative when, in fact, they can be explained on another basis. Indeed, the visual evidence of the Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey documents the piety of Henry VII and clarifies the issue of his interest in the Observant Franciscans, which others have attributed to political posturing,¹² and in so doing opens up a totally new perspective on the king. Contrary, as well, to the suggestions that Henry VII only turned to religion in his last years for reasons of guilt, the evidence clearly indicates that the focus of his particular devotional interests was developed during his years of exile in Brittany and stayed with him throughout his life.

The unassuming motif of a cord tied in a slipknot that appears on the once-gilded bronze grille surrounding the tomb of Henry VII in the Lady Chapel documents his interest in religious matters and

¹⁰ Knowles, *Religious Orders*, 2: 3.

¹¹ The interpretation of Roger Lockyer and Andrew Thrush is similar. Anthony Goodman, "Henry VII and Christian Renewal," in *Religion and Humanism*, ed. Keith Robbins, Studies in Church History, vol. 17 (Oxford, 1981), 115–25; Thomson, *Early Tudor Church and Society, 1485–1529* (London, 1993), 24; Roger Lockyer and Andrew Thrush, *Henry VII*, 3rd ed. (London, 1997), 62–63.

¹² Keith Brown, "The Franciscan Observants in England 1482–1559" (Ph.D. diss., Oxford University, 1986), 2, 29, 30, *passim*; and *idem*, "Wolsey and Ecclesiastical Order: the Case of the Franciscan Observants," in *Cardinal Wolsey: Church, State and Art*, eds. S. J. Gunn and P. G. Lindley (Cambridge, 1991), 223.

provides the key to the focus of his personal devotions (fig. 1).¹³ Underway by the fall of 1505, if not before, the grille enclosure, which measures some fourteen by twenty-two feet and stands at about twelve feet in height, forms the king's chantry chapel within the Lady Chapel (fig. 2).¹⁴ Although against such a background the motif of the slipknot is particularly small, at less than two inches, originally it recurred on the tracery of the grille one hundred times, where it ties together the ogee ribs of the panels below the king's heraldic supporters, the greyhound and the dragon.¹⁵ It is a tiny detail in the scheme of things, but one that must have been especially important to the king himself, for there are no other symbols or devices on his chantry chapel but the knotted cord, the royal badges—the rose and the portcullis—and the royal supporters. Indeed, even though the slipknot is the smallest of the five motifs found on the grille, still it is depicted there more frequently than any one of the dynastic emblems. The motif is far too small and too subtle to have served effectively any significant dynastic or propagandistic purpose. Its inclusion on the grille, therefore, where it is depicted very pointedly as an isolated motif, must have been motivated by personal rather than by political interests. In fact, the slipknot refers to the poverty and suffering of Christ and to his Passion and is found primarily among images that were commissioned for or are related to the Observant Franciscans and to the patrons of the late medieval reform of the Franciscan Order. Though largely unnoticed and

¹³ An earlier version of this material concerning the significance of the slipknot for Henry VII was presented at the Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan in 1997. Discussions of the relationship of the slipknot to the concept of Franciscan poverty, which are part of a longer article in process, were presented at Kalamazoo in 2000 and at a symposium on medieval poverty at Claremont Graduate University in 2000. For a more detailed explanation of the motif of the slipknot, see Virginia K. Henderson, "In the Image of the King: The Chapel of Henry VII at Westminster Abbey (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1998), 160–66.

¹⁴ PRO E36/214, p. 15. The basic design of the chantry chapel was known more than a year earlier, for it was described in the indentures for the Lady Chapel, signed 16 July 1504, as "a closure of metall in man[n]er of a chapell made there aboute and an autlier enclosed within"; PRO C54/365, m. 2, 15; *Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry VII*, vol. 2, 1500–1509 (London, 1963), 140.

¹⁵ If the design had been consistent, there would have been 104 knots, but the motif was omitted from one of the panels on the eastern end of the grille. Two of the original knots have been broken off, so that now there are only ninety-eight.

certainly unidentified until now, the symbol appears primarily in the images of Brittany, the Loire valley, and the south of France.¹⁶

The exile that Henry VII spent in Brittany as a youth for fourteen very formative years provides the critical link that leads ultimately to the explanation of the slipknot and the identification of the king's devotional interests. While the Franciscan convents in England remained essentially unreformed during the fifteenth century prior to the accession of Henry VII, the Observant Franciscans flourished throughout France. Their foundations expanded at an even greater pace though in Brittany, where they received ducal support.¹⁷ By calling for a return to the principles of the Rule of St Francis and especially to his vow of poverty, albeit mediated by the work of Bonaventure, the Observant friars sought to correct the pattern of laxity and sumptuous living that had spread within their Order. Like his predecessors, the duke Francis II, under whose protection the future English king had spent his exile from 1471 to 1484, was their patron. Clearly, it was under the influence of his court and that of the Breton environment in general that Henry VII developed his devotion to the friars, whom, as Vergil noted and the documents indicate, he patronized and favored throughout his reign. Indeed, the importance of the Observant Franciscans to Henry VII has been greatly underestimated.¹⁸

¹⁶ The only reference ever made to the motif occurs in the volume on Westminster Abbey published by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, where, in the description of the grille, some of the tracery is described as "bound by knots"; nothing more is said about it there or anywhere else. Royal Commission for Historical Monuments in Great Britain, *Westminster Abbey*, vol. 1, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London* (London: HMSO, 1924), 66.

¹⁷ The aristocracy of the west of France, in particular, was supportive of the Franciscans and favored the reform movement. The first house of Observants in France was established at Mirebeau near Poitiers in the late fourteenth century and was followed quickly by others in the Franciscan province of Touraine; the Observants were established at Vannes circa 1437. Hervé Martin, *Les ordres mendiants en Bretagne vers 1230-vers 1530: Pauvreté volontaire et prédication à la fin du Moyen-Age* (Rennes, 1975), 61, 87-88 [65-67]; André Vauchez, "Influences franciscaines et réseaux aristocratiques dans le Vale de Loire," *Revue d'histoire de l'église de France* 70 (1984): 95-105 [99]; Joseph Marie Le Mené, "Le cordeliers de Vannes," *Bulletin de la Société polymatique du Morbihan* (1894): 110; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division in the Medieval Franciscan Order, from Saint Francis to the Foundation of the Capuchins* (Rome, 1987), 441-42.

¹⁸ Chrimes incorrectly identified the Observants with the Spirituals, who were reformers of the thirteenth and fourteenth century, and suggested only that the friars might indicate the "religious discrimination" of Henry VII. He noted that the

In the early years of his exile Henry VII and his uncle and guardian Jasper Tudor were kept at Susicinio, an isolated castle by the sea at Sarzeau, not far from Vannes. It may have been there that Henry VII first encountered the Observant Franciscans, for Francis I of Brittany (1442–1450) had founded a convent for them nearby at Bernon, *circa* 1449.¹⁹ The Franciscans were known as the *Cordeliers* in France, an epithet that was derived from the knotted cord that distinguished their habit. It was their cord that the Breton dukes adopted, beginning in the mid-fifteenth century under Francis I, whose patron saint was St Francis, to surround their royal insignia, thereby visually aligning themselves with the Franciscans. Accordingly, both the duke and duchess were depicted in their prayer books with St Francis and the duchess Isabella Stuart was shown wearing the cord of the Franciscans around her waist in an illumination from a copy of the *Somme le roi*.²⁰

The appropriation of the Franciscan emblem became even more pronounced in the court of Francis II (1458–1488), who not only continued to display the Franciscan cord around his arms, but also depicted it conspicuously on both sides of his coins.²¹ According to contemporary inventories, the motif was used in other ducal ornaments as well, including a collar made in the form of the cord that was presented to the duke in 1468, ironically, by his mistress.²² Moreover, with the consent of the three orders of the Franciscans, the duke, the duchess, and their elder daughter Anne of Brittany were granted confraternity in 1478 at the Observant convent of

king founded three convents for the Observants, but mistakenly identified the three that Henry VII actually founded (Greenwich, which he refounded, Richmond, and Newark) as Conventual houses. At the same time, Chrimes did not mention the three Conventual houses, Canterbury, Newcastle, and Southampton, that were converted to Observant use under Henry VII. Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 305.

¹⁹ Hervé Martin, *Les ordres mendiants*, 79. Bernon is about four kilometers from Susicinio.

²⁰ Marie-Hélène Santrot, *Entre France et Angleterre, le duché de Bretagne: essai d'iconographie des ducs de Bretagne* (Nantes, 1988), 252; Jean-Yves Cozan and Jean-Christophe Cassard, *La Bretagne au temps de ducs* (Daoulas, 1991), 56–57; Bibliothèque National, Paris, Ms. lat. 1369, BN Ms. Fr 958, f. Fv, illustrated in Cozan and Cassard, 61, fig. 58 and 65, fig. 67.

²¹ Santrot, *Entre France et Angleterre*, 252; Cozan and Cassard, *La Bretagne au temps de ducs*, 56–57.

²² The collar was presented by Antoinette de Maignelais (d. 1475). Cozan and Cassard, *La Bretagne au temps de ducs*, 210; John Harthan, *The Book of Hours* (New York, 1977), 125; Santrot, *Entre France et Angleterre*, 252–53.

Clisson by the vicar general of the Observants, who was himself a Breton.²³ Like the dukes before her, Anne of Brittany, who became the duchess (1488–1514) and later twice queen of France (1491–1514), displayed the cord encircling her coat of arms also, and reproduced that motif on her coins and cloth of estate. She was reported to have worn “a chain of gold as thick as a man’s little finger, and made in the shape of a cord of Saint Francis” around her waist too, when she received an English embassy in 1490.²⁴ Furthermore, the duchess founded the *Ordre de la Cordelière* for the virtuous ladies of her court, whom she encouraged, so it was reported, to remember always the ropes and bonds of Christ.²⁵ In an illumination that celebrates the founding of the Order, she is portrayed wearing a sash that is tied in a large slipknot and clearly distinguished from her gown by its color, while the knotted cord of the friars that was adopted by the Breton court frames the entire image (fig. 3). Such then was the ambiance of the Breton court to which Henry VII had been exposed during the most impressionable years of his youth. Clearly, it was an environment in which the Franciscans, and especially the Observants, were favored.

That he brought his particular affection for the Observants with him when he returned to England in 1485 would explain the swiftness with which Henry VII was willing to consider the fate of the only tiny house of Observants in England that had been granted land, but not much more, by Edward IV in 1482.²⁶ Within the first

²³ Max Courtecuisse, “Actes du chapitre des frères mineurs de l’observance cismontaine tenu à Châteauroux en 1478,” *Revue d’histoire franciscaine* 1 (1924): 486. The bishop of Vannes Pierre de Foix, who was the brother of the duchess of Brittany, was a Franciscan, although not an Observant.

²⁴ The description of Anne of Brittany is recounted in the journal of Roger Machado, Richmond, Norroy king of arms, on his second embassy to the duchy from mid-August to mid-October 1490. *Journals of Roger Macado* in Gairdner, *Memorials of King Henry the Seventh*, *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland During the Middle Ages*, vol. 10 (London, 1858), 219; Goodman, “Henry VII and Christian Renewal,” 120; Cozan and Cassard, *La Bretagne au temps de ducs*, 164–65, 168–69, 174–75; Santrot, *Entre France et Angleterre*, 252.

²⁵ Hilarion de Coste *Les éloges et vies des reynes, princesses, dames et damoiselles illustres en piété, courage & doctrine, qui ont fleury de nostre temps, & du temps de nos pères* (Paris, 1630), 12. The *Ordre de la Cordelière* may have been founded originally by Isabella Stuart and refounded or re-instituted by Anne of Brittany; Santrot, *Entre France et Angleterre*, 251.

²⁶ A. G. Little, “Introduction of the Observant Friars into England,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 10 (1921–23), 458–61; A. R. Martin, “The Grey Friars of Greenwich,” *Archaeological Journal* 80 (1923): 85–87.

five weeks after calling his first parliament, when surely he had many pressing matters to consider, Henry VII granted the Observants a special charter, refounding their convent at Greenwich, which was constructed later at his expense.²⁷ While he granted annuities of twenty to fifty marcs a year to the established houses of the monastic orders in England, following the precedent of Edward IV,²⁸ he favored the Observants with a formal charter that was witnessed by the most prestigious officers and ecclesiastics of his fledgling reign.²⁹ The new Tudor king assured the friars of the use of their land and buildings in perpetuity, commending the salutary benefits of their masses and prayers and expressing confidence in and firm knowledge (*ex certa scientia*) of their ministry.³⁰ The lengths to which Henry VII went at that time, therefore, suggest that his devotion to the friars had been firmly established prior to his entry into England and that the survival of the convent there was a matter of no small consequence to him.

²⁷ Printed in full in Joseph Burt, "Original Documents: Charter of Henry VII to the Franciscan Friars at Greenwich, and an Inedited Seal of the Warden," *Archaeological Journal* 23 (1866): 54–59; abstracted in William Campbell, ed., *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII from Original Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office*, Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, 2 vols., Rolls Series (London, 1873–77), 1: 216–17.

²⁸ Campbell, *Materials*, 1: 195, 206, 230, 390; 2: 100, 185, 186; PRO E404/82, PRO E404/83, PRO E404/84, PRO E404/85.

²⁹ The charter of 14 December 1485 that was granted to the Observants at Greenwich was witnessed by Thomas Bourchier, archbishop of Canterbury, cardinal and primate of England; Thomas Rotherham, archbishop of York, treasurer of England; John Alcock, bishop of Worcester, lord chancellor; Peter Courtenay, bishop of Exeter, keeper of the Privy Seal; Jasper Tudor, duke of Bedford; John de la Pole, duke of Suffolk; John de la Vere, earl of Oxford, lord chamberlain; Sir John Fitzwater, steward of the household; Sir William Stanley, chamberlain; Sir Richard Croftes, treasurer of the household, and, according to the document, Thomas, earl of Nottingham, earl marshal. The last is puzzling because the title had not been held by a Thomas since Thomas Mowbray was executed in 1405; William Berkeley, whose mother was a daughter of Thomas Mowbray, was the earl of Nottingham in 1485. Printed in Burt, "Original Documents," 55–59, and Campbell, *Materials*, 1: 216–17. Construction on the convent was underway apparently as early as 1485, but it was sometime after 18 April 1494 before the cemetery and cloister were consecrated and sometime between 1493 and early April 1494 that the friars' church, dedicated to St. Francis and All Saints, was consecrated. More extensive work on the convent was undertaken continuously from *circa* 1499 to 1509, when Henry VII died. For the convent at Greenwich, see A. R. Martin, *Franciscan Architecture in England* (Manchester, England, 1937), 235–8; Malcolm Sinclair, "Saint Thomas More's 'Good Scottish Frere'" *Moreana* 14 (1977): 53–54; Little, "Introduction," 462.

³⁰ Burt, "Original Documents," 58. On 6 September 1485, just three days after his entry into London, Henry VII also granted the Franciscan friars of London four oaks with which to repair their church, which suggests that he sought them out immediately upon arriving in the city; Campbell, *Materials*, 1: 548.

In addition to the slipknots that are depicted on the bronze grille of Henry VII's tomb, the motif occurs repeatedly on the sculpted figures in the Lady Chapel at Westminster. Most conspicuous are the slipknots that secure the sashes of the numerous feathered angels that represent the seraphim—or perhaps the cherubim—in the angel friezes of the chapel, very much like the sash of Anne of Brittany depicted in the illumination of the *Ordre de la Cordelière* (fig. 4). A slipknot secures the cope of one of the angel-priests on the chancel arch also, where it was used to replace the traditional morse (fig. 5), and it appears on the statues of the martyrs St. Agatha and St. Sebastian. On St. Agatha, the image of the slipknot was created by combining the saint's sash with the carefully manipulated fabric of the bodice of her gown, so that its loop surrounds her bared breast, the symbol of her martyrdom (fig. 6). On the two statues of St. Sebastian that are in the chapel, the saint, who is bound to a pillar as Christ was in the Flagellation, is clothed in an under garment that is held at his waist by a rope tied in a slipknot (fig. 7). A slipknot adorns the purse of St. James the Great also, the first of the apostles to be martyred; and still another fastens the purse of a statue that must represent the prophet Isaiah, who foretold, according to Christian exegesis, the coming of Christ and described him as wearing "the belt of justice" around his waist.³¹

The proliferation of slipknots found in the Lady Chapel at Westminster is not unique, however. The motif appears repeatedly too, in the choir of the Cathedral of Albi in Languedoc, which was remodeled between 1474 and 1483 by its bishop Louis d'Amboise (1474–1503), who, like Henry VII, was an ardent supporter of the Observant reform. Both the knotted cord and the knotted sash are found on a number of the angels of the choir enclosure (figs. 8 and 9) and on the *Annunciation to the Virgin* (fig. 10) and an angel of the choir screen (fig. 11). The mock cope or mantle with which Christ is clothed in the *Imago Pietatis* in the Chapel of St. Michael is fastened with a cord tied in a slipknot, just as the cope of the angel-priest at Westminster, and his loincloth is secured by a slipknot, as well (fig. 12). Moreover, the wrists of Christ are bound by a rope tied in a slipknot, although the uppermost part of its loop has been broken off. The sash belt of St. John the Baptist is tied in

³¹ See Isaiah 11:1–10, and especially Isaiah 11:5.

a slipknot also, and his mantle is held by a rope secured in a slipknot that is placed on his left shoulder, significantly, directly above the sacrificial lamb that he carries.³²

Insignificant as the slipknot may appear and abstruse as its meaning may seem, the motif—which sometimes resembles a noose—refers to the ropes with which Christ was bound, tied to the pillar during the Flagellation, and led through the streets to his crucifixion, the very episodes of the Passion upon which Franciscan devotion was focused. St. Francis, in fact, had chosen the rope for his belt, according to his official biographer Bonaventure, precisely because St. Matthew described Jesus as bound when he was led before Pilate.³³ During the Middle Ages too, the column upon which Christ was thought to have been scourged was kept by the Franciscans in their chapel of St. Mary in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. It was a popular pilgrimage site throughout the medieval period and one that Henry VII's own counselor Sir Richard Guildford recorded seeing on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1506.³⁴ The ropes, then, assumed an important role both literally and metaphorically in Franciscan thinking and appeared repeatedly in their writing as well as their imagery. Indeed, the ropes seem to have signified metonymically a complex of ideas, including the suffering and abuses of the Passion, the renunciation of worldly goods, humility, and the submission of Christ to God's will, which St. Francis sought to imitate in his life of poverty. In essence, therefore, the ropes, which were represented synecdochically by the slipknot in certain images of the fifteenth century, encompassed the very ideas that lay at the core of the Franciscan concept of poverty as it was understood by the

³² Illustrated in Jean-Louis Biget, *Sainte-Cécile d'Albi: Sculptures* (Graulhet, 1997), 214–15. Because of its recurring use at Albi, Biget and other scholars have recognized that the motif of the slipknot must be symbolic but were unable to identify it; Jean-Louis Biget, Y. Carbonell-Lamouthe, and M. Pradakier-Schlumberger, "Le choeur de la cathédrale d'Albi," *Congrès archéologique de France* 140 (1985): 75–76. Biget made no attempt to explain the motif in his 1997 book.

³³ *Expositio super Regulam FF. Minorum in Doctoris seraphici S. Bonaventurae . . . Opera Omnia*, vol. 8 (Quaracchi, 1900), 400. For a discussion of the rope in Italian Passion imagery, see Anne Derbes, *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy: Narrative Painting, Franciscan Ideologies, and the Levant* (Cambridge, 1996), 132–35.

³⁴ Richard Guildford, *The Pilgrimage of Syr R. Gwylforde to the Holy Land, A.D. 1506, from a Copy Believed to be Unique from the Press of Richard Pynson*, ed. Henry Ellis (London, 1851), 25, 26.

Observants.³⁵ Thus the representation of the slipknot on the grille of the tomb of Henry VII, who would have been introduced to the motif and the concepts of the Observants during his years in Brittany, would have signaled his personal devotion to the Passion and his hope for salvation.

No historian disputes Henry VII's patronage of the Observant Franciscans, which is well documented, but most have regarded his devotional practices as merely formal and conventional, and far too frequently as simply politically expedient. The author of the most recent work on the history of the Observant Franciscans in England, for instance, attributed Henry VII's support of the friars to political posturing, for otherwise, he reasoned, rather ironically, the king "need hardly have gone to such lengths to express a purely personal devotion."³⁶ In the same vein, Goodman suggested that Henry VII's support of the religious houses, as well as his "lavish almsgiving," might have been carried out to secure the loyalty of those houses.³⁷ Vergil, in contrast, noted simply that the king was "*particularly fond* of those Franciscan friars whom they call observants," and once again the evidence seems to bear him out.³⁸ In his will, Henry VII referred specifically to his "long contynued devocion towards Saint Fraunces," and to his charity toward the Observant friars. Both statements now appear to have been revealingly accurate. He had always had "a speciall confidence," he wrote, in their devout prayers for his well being during his lifetime and hoped that the friars would continue to remember him in prayer after his death. For that reason, he said, and out of his concern that other support might not be forthcoming to serve their basic needs, he bequeathed substantial sums to the six Observant convents in England.³⁹ Besides those provisions though,

³⁵ See note 13.

³⁶ Brown, "Franciscan Observants," 2, 29, 30, *passim*; and *idem*, "Wolsey and Ecclesiastical Order," 223.

³⁷ Goodman, "Henry VII and Christian Renewal," 117, nt. 10.

³⁸ Vergil, 147. There is no mention of the Observants in Bernard André's *Vita Henrici Septimi* or *Annales Henrici VII*, but possibly that may be explained by the fact that André was an Augustinian friar. Bernard André, *Historia Regis Henrici Septimi*, in *Memorials of King Henry the Seventh*, ed. James Gairdner, Rolls Series, vol. 10 (London, 1858); Daniel B. Hobbins, "The earliest Contemporary Account of the Founding of the Tudor Dynasty, Bernard André's *Vita Henrici Septimi*: An English Translation (M. A. thesis, Bowling Green State University, 1995). I am most grateful to Professor Thomas R. Knox, who made a copy of the above thesis available to me.

³⁹ Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 29–31. The six Observant convents were Greenwich, Richmond, Canterbury, Southampton, Newcastle, and Newark.

he left still other funds for the completion or improvement of their individual convents and gardens.⁴⁰ Throughout his reign, he provided them with annual and sometimes monthly funds, as well as food, drink, books, clothing, and upkeep for their buildings.

Henry VII's devotion to St. Francis, and thus to the Observants, who adhered most closely to the original Rule of their founder, is manifested too in the silver-gilt statue of the saint that he bequeathed to his chantry altar in the Lady Chapel at Westminster.⁴¹ It is indicated as well by the images of the saint that adorned the hangings and altar cloths of his private chapel earlier in his reign.⁴² Henry VII was, in fact, the first of the English kings to use a Franciscan friar as his confessor, a practice that he adopted most likely during his exile in Brittany.⁴³ The confidence that he had in the friars, moreover, and the esteem that he accorded them, is signified by his inclusion of his confessor, who was an Observant, and the Provincial of the Observant friars in England in the group of bishops and nobles that he appointed in his will to adjudicate complaints and rectify wrongs in the settlement of his estate.⁴⁴ To designate his personal confessor for such a task was not altogether unusual, but to go so far as to include the Provincial certainly was. Indeed, so strong was Henry VII's commitment to the Observants that, in an action that hardly would have benefited him politically, and one that no other ruler took, he threatened to expel the Conventual Franciscans from England altogether when the pope sought to unite the two factions in 1506.⁴⁵

Neither was Henry VII's support of the Observants limited to their convents in England, for he also provided a yearly pension for the Observant friars at Saint-Omer, a border town variously under the control of the French king and the duke of Burgundy during the fifteenth century. In the first decade of the sixteenth century, the city was under Flemish jurisdiction, but, at least according to Louis XII, subject to French sovereignty. There is no indication of

⁴⁰ Astle, *The Will of Henry VII*, 30.

⁴¹ Astle, *The Will of Henry VII*, 34.

⁴² PRO E36/209, f. 26; PRO E101/414/12; Astle, *The Will of Henry VII*, 34.

⁴³ This was brought to my attention by Professor Harry Schnitker.

⁴⁴ Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 11.

⁴⁵ Glassberger, *Chronica Fratris Nicolai Glassberger, ordini minorum observantium* (Florence, 1887), 541–42. Cited in Little, "Introduction," 458, and in Michael K. Jones and Malcolm G. Underwood, *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge, 1992), 193.

precisely how many years the pension was given in the order initiated by the king, but clearly it had been paid for four or more years when Henry VII instructed that it be paid in 1508 "by waye of almesse."⁴⁶ Five years earlier, that is, in 1503, his mother Lady Margaret had sent forty shillings to the king's confessor as well, to be put toward the building of an Observant house in France.⁴⁷ Unfortunately, there is no indication of which friary that was, but without question it was a gesture that Henry VII would have condoned, if not instigated. Obviously, he had no official obligation to support convents in France or Flanders, and, in strictly political terms, to have done so would have offered him no appreciable benefit. If, on the other hand, the mere appearance of piety been his goal, his support of non-English houses would not have been an especially effective way to accomplish it. The fact that Henry VII did support Saint-Omer, however, and very possibly other reformed houses on the continent, serves to demonstrate the extent of his dedication to the Observants, wherever they might have been located, and undercuts further any argument that his patronage of the English friars was simply politically motivated.

The magnitude and complexity of Henry VII's provisions for masses and prayers to be said following his death have occasioned numerous comments about his presumed guilty conscience, his alleged need for restitution for his Machiavellian ways, and his calculated attempt to purchase salvation. Even R. L. Storey, who is one of the few historians who gave credence to Henry VII's piety, noting that his devotions and alms-giving far exceeded those of his contemporaries and immediate royal predecessors, interpreted these provisions as a morbid obsession with the fate of his soul.⁴⁸ Henry VII's bequest, however, was not as unusual as has been supposed and therefore, does not warrant such conclusions. Secondly and most importantly,

⁴⁶ BL Add. Ms. 19398, no. 18, f. 34. The document, heretofore unnoticed, instructs that the pension be paid for 1508 and the two previous years and indicates clearly that it had been paid prior to then. St. Omer had been converted to an Observant house in 1408. For the complex issues involved in the control of Saint-Omer at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, see David Potter, "The Frontiers of Artois in European Diplomacy, 1482-1560," in *Arras et la diplomatie Européenne XV^e-XVI^e siècles*, ed. Denis Clauzel, Charles Giry-Deloison, and Christophe Leduc (Arras, 1999), 262-65; Loius Trenard, *Histoire des Pays-Bas Français: Flandre, Artois, Hainaut, Boulonnais, Cambrésis* (Toulouse 1972), 197.

⁴⁷ SJC D91.20, p. 80.

⁴⁸ Storey, *The Reign of Henry VII*, 63.

its purpose within the context of late medieval devotional practice has been misunderstood and thus misinterpreted. The ten thousand masses that Henry VII requested be said for his soul as quickly as possible after his death may have exceeded the number requested by any kings of England since Henry III,⁴⁹ but still there was other precedence for them within the realm. The king's great uncle, for instance, Cardinal Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester and counselor to Henry VI, had requested that ten thousand masses be said at his death also;⁵⁰ and William Courtenay, archbishop of Canterbury in the late fourteenth-century, had requested that fifteen thousand masses be said for his soul.⁵¹ If great numbers of memorial masses were found less frequently in England, however, or at least among English kings, Henry VII's provisions were very much in keeping with the custom as it was practiced in France and Brittany, which so informed his devotional practices. A fourteenth-century French testator, for example, had requested as many as twenty-five thousand masses for the repose of his soul. Among the lesser nobles in France, a bequest for two to three thousand masses was not unusual, and five to ten times that number was not uncommon.⁵² In this respect then, Henry VII was following an accepted, if not common, practice in England, and one that may well have been inspired by his experiences abroad.

In addition to the funeral masses, Henry VII also paid for masses to be said for his health and soul and for those of his family since the beginning of his reign; and in at least the last three years of his life, he paid for ten thousand or more masses each Lenten season.⁵³ Clearly, he was in the habit of supporting numerous masses, so that

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Margaret Aston, "Death," in *Fifteenth-Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England*, ed. Rosemary Horrox (Cambridge, 1994), 212.

⁵¹ Christopher Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England 1066–1550* (London, 1997), 6.

⁵² Jacques Chiffolleau, "Sur l'usage obsessionnel de la messe pour les morts à la fin du Moyen Âge," in *Faire croire: Modalités de la diffusion et de la réception des messages religieux du XII^e au XV^e siècle*, 233–56, Collection de l'École de Rome, vol. 51 (Rome, 1981), 235.

⁵³ In the spring of 1507, Henry VII paid for at least 10,209 masses said within a month's time. One thousand masses were said by the Observants and 9209 of them were said by John Fisher and Thomas Wolsey. In the month prior to his death in 1509, which was Lent, he paid for as many as ten thousand masses, also. PRO E36/214, pp. 147, 153, 246, 327, 329.

from this perspective too, his request for a large number of funeral masses does not appear so unusual either. Rather, it was a continuation of a devotional practice that he appears to have followed throughout his adult life. Contrary to the suppositions of guilt put forth by historians in the nineteenth century and later, the purpose for the masses within the context of medieval devotion is expressed clearly in Thomas à Kempis's *Imitatio Christi*. The treatise, which gained widespread popularity in England in the sixteenth century, was published in its entirety in English for the first time in 1503–04 through the patronage and personal efforts of Lady Margaret and appears to have influenced the imagery of the Lady Chapel at Westminster.⁵⁴ According to that English translation, “whan a preyst sayth masse, he honoureth god, he gyueth ioy vnto angels, . . . [and] he gyueth rest to them that be passed.”⁵⁵ Essentially the same idea is expressed in the charter that Henry VII granted to the Observants in December 1485, which states that the king considered the celebration of the Eucharist the greatest work of mercy and piety, for through it souls would be purged and sinners led back to grace.⁵⁶ The strength of the king's belief in prayer, moreover, as well as masses, is demonstrated in his will where he encouraged his executors to “thinke & considere howe necessaire, behooful and how profitable it is to dede folks to be praied for.”⁵⁷ Henry VII's requests for prayers and masses were huge, constant, and costly, certainly an

⁵⁴ The 1503–04 edition was published by Richard Pynson; he reprinted it in 1517 and Wynkyn de Worde published three editions between 1511 and 1528. For the influence of the *Imitatio Christi* on the Lady Chapel, see Virginia K. Henderson, *A Glorious Vision of Heaven: The Chapel of Henry VII at Westminster Abbey* in *Sevante Medieval Studies* 12 (2002): pp. 27–46 and *idem*, “In the Image of the King,” 120–42.

⁵⁵ Thomas a Kempis, *A full deuoute & gostely treatyse of ye Imytacion & folowyngye ye blessyd lyfe of our most merciful sauour cryst: compyled in Latyn by the right worsyppfull doctor, master Iohn Gerson, & translate into englissh the yere of oure lorde .M.d.ii. by mayster wyllyam atkynson, doctor of diuynyte, at ye speciall request & commaundement of ye full excellent pryncesse, Margarete, moder to our souerayne lorde Kynge Henry the .viii., and Countesse of Rychemount & Derby; Here beginneth the forthe boke of the folowyngye Iesu cryst & of the most excellent prynces, Margaret, moder vnto our souereine lorde, kinge Henry the .viii., Countes of Rychemont and Derby, And by the same Pryncees it was translated out of Frenche into Englysshe, in fourme & maner ensuyngye, The yere of our lorde god M.D.iiii, in The Earliest English Translation of the First Three Books of the De Imitatione Christi, . . . Also The Earliest Printed Translation of the Whole Work from a Copy in the British Museum, ed. John K. Ingram, E.E.T.S. vol. 63 (London, 1893), 268.*

⁵⁶ Pollard, 3: 190–91. For the Latin text, see Burtt, “Original Documents,” 58.

⁵⁷ Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 10.

outlay that would not seem a likely choice for a more worldly king with secular objectives in mind, but one that comfortably fits an individual who is decidedly more devout. They assuredly suggest someone whose beliefs were closely aligned with the thinking of late medieval affective piety.

According to John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, who delivered the funeral sermon for Henry VII, the king had always had a “grete hope and confydence in prayer,”⁵⁸ and more significantly, “it was not vnknownen the studyous & desyrous mynde that he had vnto prayer.”⁵⁹ Fisher mentioned specifically the many prayers and daily collects that the king had had said for him throughout the churches of England during his reign, the ten thousand masses that he had had said during Lent in “dyuerse yeres,” the yearly stipends that he gave to virtuous priests, and the daily alms that were given to the poor, all of which are documented.⁶⁰ From the bishop’s perspective, proof of the king’s belief lay in the numbers. Effectively, in fact, what he has told us is that Henry VII endowed great numbers of prayers because he *believed* in their efficacy.

Throughout the funeral sermon, it was prayer for the king’s soul too, that Fisher sought from his audience: “Let vs helpe hym at the lest with our prayers besechyng almyghty god for his infynyte mercy to delyuer his soule and to pardon it.”⁶¹ It was simply prayer that he sought, for instance, when he chided his audience in a passage that puzzled Chrimes: “kyng Henry, yf thou were on lyue agayne, many one that is here present now wolde pretende a full grete pyte & tendernesse vpon thee.”⁶² Thinking only in political terms, Chrimes

⁵⁸ John Fisher, *This sermon folowyng was compyled & sayd in the Cathedrall chyrche of saynt Poule Within the cyte of London by the ryght reuerende fader in god Iohn bysshop of Rochester, the body beyng present of the moost famouse prynce kyng Henry the .vij. the .x. day of Maye the yere of oure lorde god .M.CCCC.ix. whiche sermon was enpnynted at the specyall request of the ryght excellent pryncesse Margarete moder vnto the sayd noble prynce and Countesse of Rychemonde and Derby*, in *The English Works of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester*, ed. John E. B. Mayor, Part 1, 268–88, EETS, e.s., vol. 27 (London, 1876; rpt. Bungay, England, 1935), Fisher, 271, 273.

⁵⁹ Fisher, *Sermon . . . Henry the .vij.*, 272.

⁶⁰ Fisher, *Sermon . . . Henry the .vij.*, 272. Henry VII’s interest in and concern over the lack of what he considered virtuous as well as educated priests is expressed in his full and lengthy indenture with Westminster Abbey for the care of his chantry chapel, almsmen, and scholars; PRO C54/365, m. 8. For an analysis of Fisher’s funeral sermon, see Henderson, “In the Image of a King,” 247–57.

⁶¹ Fisher, *Sermon . . . Henry the .vij.*, 281.

⁶² Fisher, *Sermon . . . Henry the .vij.*, 280. Clearly, in this context, Fisher used “pre-

concluded that Fisher was “making a covert allusion to persons who, if the king had been still alive, would have curried favour with him, but who had taken a different line” since Henry VII had died.⁶³ In fact, by using the faithful servants of David and Saul as his examples in the sermon, Fisher was trying to admonish the king’s courtiers and servants to be faithful to their former master in his time of need through their prayers, for “the prayers of many can not be but herde.”⁶⁴ Indeed, Fisher’s now misunderstood plea to the mourners was inspired by the same motive as the king’s endowed prayers and masses and the originally intended placement of his tomb before the high altar in the Lady Chapel at Westminster.⁶⁵ It was a desire for prayers to aid the soul’s passage through purgatory that so characterized medieval devotional practice.

In a similar way, Goodman misinterpreted Henry VII’s bequest of a silver-gilt pyx to every parish church and house of the four orders of friars in England. The king had chosen to do this, according to his will, because of his “inward regrete and displeasure” at having seen “the holie Sacrament of the Aulter kept in ful simple and inhonest Pixes, specially Pixes of copre and tymber” in churches throughout England.⁶⁶ Goodman, however, interpreted the king’s gift as an indication that he “valued correctness in worship as much as he did in financial administration” and described the king’s reaction as “irritation,” which is quite different from “inward regrete.”⁶⁷ In fact, in making his bequest, Henry VII was fulfilling the wishes of the last testament of St. Francis. “Above everything else,” St. Francis had said, “I want this most holy Sacrament to be honored and venerated and reserved in places which are richly ornamented. Whenever I find his most holy name or writings containing his words in an improper place, I make a point of picking them up, and I ask that

tende” in its now less common sense to mean to offer or extend; see *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1961).

⁶³ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 314.

⁶⁴ Fisher, *Sermon . . . Henry the .vij.*, 273.

⁶⁵ The purposefulness of the placement originally intended for the tomb of Henry VII within the Lady Chapel was discussed more extensively in my paper at the Southeastern College Art Association Conference in October 2001 (abstract in press); see also Henderson, “In the Image of a King,” 146–53 and figure 128.

⁶⁶ Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 38.

⁶⁷ Goodman, “Henry VII and Christian Renewal,” 117.

they be picked up and put aside in a suitable place.”⁶⁸ Further, according to the fourteenth-century *Speculum perfectionis*, St Francis had “wished to send friars through all the Provinces carrying fair clean pyxes, and wherever they found the lord’s Body reserved unworthily, they were to place it in these pyxes with all honour.”⁶⁹ That is precisely what Henry VII attempted to do.

Pious bequests of liturgical objects, including pyxes, were not unusual in the English wills of the late Middle Ages, but the scale of Henry VII’s gift was exceptional, even when measured in terms of princely magnificence. At four pounds apiece, each pyx, which was to be made according to a model provided by the king, cost more than four times what he had paid himself for silver-gilt pyxes in 1504. Clearly, he was serious in his commitment, for at least a thousand pounds had already been delivered to London goldsmiths for their making before Henry VII died in April 1509.⁷⁰ Neither was his concern for the pyx or its consecrated content new, for he had sought to prevent their desecration in a proclamation of 1487.⁷¹ The focus of the iconography of the king’s Lady Chapel at Westminster, which celebrated the union of man with God in the moment of the *Sanctus* during the Mass and in redemption after death, was essentially eucharistic, while the object of his indentures was the performance of many masses. Given that context and his association with the Franciscans, it seems far more likely that Henry VII’s bequest of the pyxes was an act of piety, and probably a demonstration of a genuine concern for the respectful care of the consecrated host.

⁶⁸ *The Testament of St Francis* in Marion A. Habig, *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago, 1973), 67.

⁶⁹ *Mirror of Perfection*, in Marion A. Habig, *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago, 1973), 1191.

⁷⁰ BL MS Add. 59899, f. 41v; PRO E36/214, pp. 327, 342. The cost of the pyxes may suggest that they were standing pyxes; otherwise, they must have been very finely made, whatever their details were. As an important liturgical vessel, under normal circumstances the pyx would not have been visible to the public. Therefore, it would not have been an especially effective propagandistic tool, for it was customary to either lock it them securely in a cupboard or suspend it over the altar hidden beneath a canopy or draped with a cloth.

⁷¹ Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, ed., *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, vol. 1, *The Early Tudors (1485–1553)* (New Haven, 1964), no. 13, p. 14.

Indeed, it is a gesture that is indicative of someone whose religious interest was much more than perfunctory.⁷²

Even the date on which the indentures that founded the chantry of Henry VII in the Lady Chapel were signed relates symbolically to his devotion to the Passion, his concern for the host, and his interest in the Five Wounds of Christ, to which a quarter of the masses to be said after his death were dedicated. The documents were written, and probably illuminated, beforehand, for clearly the actual date of the signing, 16 July 1504, was inserted in a different hand in a space that was left for that purpose.⁷³ It was on the sixteenth of July that the Feast of the Relics was celebrated at Westminster Abbey, where the most important and indeed very special relic was that of the Holy Blood, which Henry III had obtained for the abbey in 1247.⁷⁴ It was on the sixteenth of July too, that St. Francis had been canonized in 1228, and thus it was a feast day for the Franciscans, as well.⁷⁵ The selection of the date, therefore—which only could have occurred at Westminster, for the Feast of the Relics was celebrated on different days at different churches—honored two primary aspects of the king's devotional interests. The choice of the date is far too subtle for someone trying to achieve only the appearance of piety, and one that is unlikely to have happened simply fortuitously, given Henry VII's patronage of the reformed Franciscans.

⁷² For other expressions of the medieval concern for the use of proper pyxes and the proper care of the host that are similar to Henry VII's, see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1991), 45–47. Goodman, "Henry VII and Christian Renewal," 117.

⁷³ PRO E33/1, f. 1.

⁷⁴ The feast of the Relics is listed together with the feasts of Easter, St. George, Ascension, Pentecost, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Corpus Christi, Assumption of the Virgin, and Nativity of the Virgin in a roll of household expenses of Henry VII for 1496–97. An entry in the household accounts of Elizabeth of York for July 1502 lists her offering on "Relique Sonday," which undoubtedly refers to the feast at Westminster; *Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York: Wardrobe Accounts of Edward the Fourth*, ed. Nicholas Harris Nicolas (London, 1830), 31. Henry III had obtained the Relic of the Holy Blood from the Patriarch of Jerusalem and, in imitation of Louis IX of France, paraded it through the streets of London to the abbey when it arrived in England. Barbara Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and Its Estates* (Oxford, 1977), 44; PRO E101/414/9; C. R. Cheney, *Handbook of Dates for Students of English History* (London, 1961), 59.

⁷⁵ The foundation stone of the church at Assisi was laid on the following day, 17 July 1228. The modern Catholic Church, however, celebrates the feast of the canonization of St. Francis on 15 July.

The crucifix and the Crucifixion were, of course, conventional images, but they took on special significance in the context of the Franciscan devotion to the Passion and in relation to the motif of the slipknot. They appear to have held a special significance for Henry VII, as well. It was an image of the crucifix, for instance, rather than any of a group of conventionally used motifs, that was chosen to be embroidered on the orphrey of the crimson velvet chasuble that Henry VII sent in January 1502 to the Cathedral of Vannes, where he had worshipped during his exile.⁷⁶ In May of that same year, he bought a case for a cross, and in 1507 he purchased a cross.⁷⁷ In 1506 he paid for a drawing of the rood “at London,” and in 1508 he made an offering of gold and provided for a fifteen-pound wax taper to be placed before the rood of Chester.⁷⁸ Most significantly though, Richard Pynson gave Henry VII a crucifix in 1506.⁷⁹ Pynson had printed the Sarum Missal for Henry VII in 1504, the same year in which he completed the printing of Lady Margaret’s translation of the *Imitatio Christi*, and was named the King’s Printer

⁷⁶ The vestments that Henry VII sent to Vannes may be those listed in the Great Wardrobe accounts in an entry dated 13 October 1501, which describes crimson velvet altercloths and a vestment that were embroidered with “foules of Venice goold and a crosse.” The image of the cross was only one of a great number of images used on chasubles, which often were adorned with figures of saints, the apostles, scenes from the life of Christ and the Virgin, and other themes. Henry VII made a specific choice to use the cross. The orphreys of the chasuble that Richard II donated to the shrine of Edward the Confessor in 1389, by contrast, were embroidered with the figures of the Virgin, St. Edward, St. Edmund, St. John the Baptist, and an abbess, together with the arms of the king and queen and the royal arms. The vestments that Henry IV gave to St George’s Chapel bore scenes from the life of Thomas of Lancaster, who was regarded then as a saint. Of the forty copes, twenty-one vestments, and other cloths bequeathed to Christ’s College by Lady Margaret, only one altarcloth was embroidered with the crucifix. The monogram of Jesus, IHS, however, which represented the cult and feast to which she was devoted particularly, was used frequently. PRO E101/415/7, f. 55; Archives départementales du Morbihan, series G, 74 G 17, f. 49; J. Allanic, *Le prisonnier de la tour d’Elven; ou, le jeunisse* (Vannes, 1909), 38, 63, nt. 1; Nigel Saul, “Richard II and Westminster Abbey,” in *The Cloister and the World: Essays in Medieval History in Honour of Barbara Harvey*, ed. John Blair and Brian Golding (Oxford, 1996), 201; Arthur Reeves Echerd, Jr., “Canonization and Politics in Late Medieval England: the Cult of Thomas of Lancaster” (Ph.D. diss., The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1983), 246; Robert Forsyth Scott, “On a list (Preserved in the Treasury of St. John’s College) of the Plate, Books and Vestments Bequeathed by the Lady Margaret to Christ’s College,” *Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 9 (1894–98): 356–61.

⁷⁷ PRO E101/415/3, f. 93v; PRO E36/214, f. 122.

⁷⁸ PRO E36/214, pp. 83, 326.

⁷⁹ PRO E26/214, p. 77.

two years later. Even as a favored servant though, his gift of a crucifix would have been appropriate only if Henry VII had had a sincere interest in what it represented.⁸⁰ In light of this, perhaps the fact that the king bequeathed a relic of the True Cross to his chantry altar in the Lady Chapel has significance over and beyond the fact that such a relic was commonly found in royal and princely chapels.⁸¹

In his alms-giving and charitable gifts, which once again were extensive, Henry VII appears to have been especially aware of and sympathetic with those who were generally deemed the worthy poor. That is, the aged, blind, lame, and sick, women with children, friars, nuns, and those who had suffered physical or substantial material losses.⁸² In particular though, he gave consistently and generously to the Observants, whose convents he built and repaired and for whom he provided food, books, and alms on a regular basis. He also gave alms secretly to "worthy" priests, according to Vergil, a gesture that in its secrecy had to have reflected pious belief rather than public image-making.⁸³ In fact, his practice conformed to the teachings of the famous Observant preacher St. Bernardino of Siena, who severely criticized false charity and urged that it be given in secret.⁸⁴ Henry VII contributed as well to the building of bridges and roads,⁸⁵ which were regarded as charitable gestures then, as were the diverse burials he funded and even the tomb he provided for Richard III in 1494.⁸⁶ His funding of the Lady chapels at Westminster

⁸⁰ PRO E36/214, p. 83. Samuel Sandars identified a boss at Great St. Mary's Church, Cambridge as a representation of Henry VII kneeling in prayer before an image of the crucified Christ. If he was correct in his identification, the image of the boss may have reflected what was known to have been the king's devotional interest. Henry VII donated a hundred marcs to the rebuilding of the church in 1507. Samuel Sandars, *Historical and Architectural Notes on Great St. Mary's Church, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1869), 12, 35–36.

⁸¹ Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 34.

⁸² For example, PRO E101/415/3, ff. 11, 15, 19, 34, 50, 64v, 63v; PRO E414/6, ff. 15, 25; PRO E101/414/16, ff. 6v, 23, 24, 24v; PRO E36/214, p. 296; BL Add. 59899, ff. 30, 33. In February 1496, Henry VII granted one Thomas Andrew license to collect alms because he had lost his house, stables, barn, and all moveable goods to fire and thus fallen into extreme poverty; Hughes and Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 1: 36, no. 32.

⁸³ Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, 147.

⁸⁴ Ada Harrison, ed., *Examples of San Bernardino* (London, 1926), 115.

⁸⁵ PRO E101/414/16, ff. 1, 34v, 73; PRO E101/415/3, ff. 1, 73, 80; BL Add. 7099, f. 71; Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 21. Henry VII left the very large sum of two thousand pounds in his will for the building of roads and bridges after his death.

⁸⁶ BL Add. 7099, ff. 26, 30; PRO E101/415/3, ff. 6, 23v, 52, 52v, 60, 83, 98v;

and Windsor was charitable as well, as was, of course, his funding of an almshouse at Westminster and the hospital at the Savoy, which was the first of its kind in England. Moreover, the range of his generosity extended beyond the norm in ways that should dispel all notions that he was dour and miserly. He supplied, for instance, twenty pounds worth of drink and “bucks” for the “recreation” of all the scholars at Cambridge in the spring of 1506, following their “disputacons,” and more than five hundred gallons of Gascon wine for them the following year.⁸⁷

By offering alms and support to the Observants, Henry VII assisted in their pursuit of the ideals of St. Francis and their imitation of the life of Christ. In return, the friars would have offered prayers for the king. The indentures for the chantry chapel of Henry VII express likewise his hope that the poor who received alms from him would offer prayers out of their charity, as well.⁸⁸ It was an arrangement that epitomized the paradoxically complementary and reciprocal worlds of the rich and poor as they were constructed in the medieval conception of the social structure.⁸⁹ The poor, or at least the worthy poor, were deemed the chosen people of God, for Christ had chosen to dwell among them, and therefore their intercessory prayers were regarded as the most effective. The rich, on the other hand, could offer charity in the form of alms to ease the suffering of the poor. It was a relatively conventional practice, but one that Henry VII followed once again in a particularly generous way. St. Bernardino expected even more, saying that “when you see a poor man, help him; succor him yourself, do not wait for somebody else to do it so that you need do nothing.”⁹⁰ His instructions are reflected not only in Henry VII’s support of the Observants and gift of alms to countless friars and other individuals that came to his court, but more particularly in his personal effort to convert the heretic to whom he gave alms in Canterbury in the spring of 1498 and in his spontaneous gifts of alms to various individuals, such as the old man the

PRO E36/214, p. 257. The tomb was erected in the church of the Franciscan friars at Leicester, where Richard III was buried after Bosworth, and was destroyed during the Reformation.

⁸⁷ PRO E36/214, p. 57, 176.

⁸⁸ PRO C54/365, m. 6.

⁸⁹ For discussions of the relationship of charity and poverty, see especially Bronislaw Geremek, *Poverty, A History* (Oxford, 1994), 20–27, 35–44, 48; Carter Lindberg, *Beyond Charity: Reformation Initiatives for the Poor* (Minneapolis, 1993), 27–30.

⁹⁰ Harrison, *San Bernardino*, 54.

king passed at the Eltham Park gate in June 1507 and another old man he encountered in his travels two months later.⁹¹ Likewise, the explanation offered in the king's will for his building of the Savoy hospital echoes the directives of the saint: the project was undertaken with "great pitie and compassion" because an "infinite nombre of pouer nedie people miserably dailly die, no man putting hande of helpe or remedie."⁹² No doubt Henry VII was influenced too, by the celebrated Observant preacher from Brittany Olivier Maillard, who visited him at least once and possibly on two occasions.⁹³ Especially reproachful of the rich, whom he saw as fleecing the poor, the Breton friar adamantly urged the giving of alms, as did John Fisher, who often preached before the king.⁹⁴ "The ryche man oweth of dutye to doo his mercy vpon the poore creature," the bishop wrote, "the poorer that a man be the more nede he hath to the ryche man."⁹⁵ Clearly Henry VII honored these obligations, but the breadth of his charity surely exceeded mere duty, most especially in his care for the Observants.

The reformed friars were deemed particularly worthy recipients of charity because they had chosen voluntarily to forego the more comfortable and often extravagant lifestyle of their Conventual

⁹¹ PRO E101/414/16, f. 24v; PRO E36/214, pp. 163, 186.

⁹² Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 15.

⁹³ Maillard visited England in the winter of 1500–01, and the court of Henry VII during the week of Christmas, when the king sent to Greenwich for him. The "ecclesiastic, a great preacher, and a visitor of the Order of St. Francis" who, according to a Spanish envoy, was consulting with Henry VII in the summer of 1498 may well have been Maillard, too. PRO E101/415/3, ff. 39v, 42; Cal. of State Letters, Spain, 169, #210. Brown has suggested that Maillard was in England based on two entries in the accounts of Henry VII that do not mention the friar specifically. One records twenty pounds in alms that were given to "a freer of bretaine" in April 1498, which very possibly could have been Maillard because of the great size of the king's gift, but does not necessarily have to have been he. The other entry records twenty pounds that were given to "freers obs'vnces of Fraunces" in July 1501, a gift that might have been given to any of several groups of Observant friars, but need not be construed to have involved Maillard, and should not be of its own accord. E101/414/16, f. 24v; PRO E101/415/3, f. 55v; Brown, "Franciscan Observants," 49. Maillard served as Vice Provincial of Aquitaine from 1484–1487 and 1496–1499 and as Vicar-General of the Transalpine Chapter of the Observants from 1487–90, 1493–96, and 1499–1502.

⁹⁴ Alexander Samouillan, *Olivier Maillard, sa prédication et son temps: étude sur la chaire et la société françaises au quinzième siècle* (Toulouse, 1891), 111.

⁹⁵ John Fisher, *This Treatyse concernynge the fruytful saynges of Dawyd the kynge & prophete in the seuen penytencyall psalmes* in *The English Works of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester*, ed. John E. B. Mayor, Part 1, 268–88, EETS, e.s., vol. 27 (London, 1876; rpt. Bungay, England, 1935), 14.

brethren, and therefore their prayers would have been thought especially efficacious. Henry VII's personal dedication to St. Francis and to the Observants is even more understandable though, given the fact that when he lived in exile in Brittany, he was a landless and penniless young noble, totally and precariously dependent upon the whims of the duke.⁹⁶ The king himself, therefore, would have been counted among the poor, as they were defined in the Middle Ages, for he lived at that time without those things that were appropriate to his estate.⁹⁷ Indeed, his own experience and personal plight might explain in large part the compassion he showed later for the honest poor.

The unusual course that Henry Tudor's life took from his birth until his ascension to the crown made him ripe for deep-seated spiritual conviction. By any measure, it is a miracle that he became king, and it would have been most natural in the fifteenth century, particularly given the medieval propensity to interpret historical events as the working out of God's intention,⁹⁸ to attribute his survival and rise to power to God's hand. When the young Lancastrian fled his Yorkist pursuers in the care of Jasper Tudor in 1471, he had no way of knowing what lay ahead, not even the fact that his future lay in Brittany rather than in France, to which the two travelers thought they were sailing. But for the premature death of Edward IV in 1483, he probably would have remained indefinitely in his adopted country. His life there was not easy though, for as a pawn in international politics, he was sought at various times by three different kings.⁹⁹ On several occasions his escape from their clutch was narrow, so it is little wonder that he became astute, clever, and

⁹⁶ In 1482 Margaret Beaufort, who at that time was married to Edward IV's steward of the royal household Thomas, Lord Stanley, was negotiating to obtain a pardon for Henry Tudor from the Yorkist king. A draft of the agreement permitted Henry to inherit the lands of his maternal grandmother Margaret Beauchamp upon her death *if* he were in Edward's good graces at that time. SJC D56.158; Jones and Underwood, *The King's Mother*, 60–61.

⁹⁷ For the poor in the Middle Ages, see Geremek, *Poverty*, 53, 60 and Lindberg, *Beyond Charity*, 19–22. Henry Tudor was stripped of the honor of Richmond by Edward IV in 1471, when the king gave it to his brother, the future Richard III. In a letter sent to his supporters in 1485, Henry described himself as "your *poor* exiled friend," most likely a reference to his loss of land and title; BL Add 12520, f. 3. Italics added.

⁹⁸ See in particular Stephen Nichols, *Romanesque Signs: Early Medieval Narrative and Iconography* (New Haven, 1983), 1–15.

⁹⁹ Henry Tudor was sought by Edward IV, Louis XI, and Richard III.

suspicious, all traits that were attributed to him later as king.¹⁰⁰ Under such trying circumstances too, it would have been quite natural for him to have turned to God and to the religious for comfort, a practice that he appears to have continued throughout his life. Undoubtedly, it was the Observant friars in particular who offered him succor and support while he was abroad, and it was with them specifically, according to his will, that he was in the habit of having "secret conversations" while he was king.¹⁰¹ It was his confessor, for example, an Observant friar at Richmond, who told him of the death of Prince Arthur in 1502 while all other persons were excused from his presence, and apparently the friar comforted him as well at the death of Queen Elizabeth a year later.¹⁰²

More than likely also, his experiences in exile contributed to the development of Henry VII's image of himself as providentially guided. Both the inclination to interpret events in terms of sacred history and the redeemer-hero legend of Cadwalader, which was popular not only in Wales but also in Brittany, certainly would have encouraged that perception.¹⁰³ Whether he waited for the Welsh poets to cast him in the role of the redeemer-hero with the rise of Richard III, or he cast himself in that role to give meaning to his exile, clearly the legendary prophecy presented the potential to instill the notion of a prince as Christ-like.¹⁰⁴ It would have been but a small step from there to interpret his exile anagogically as a form of preparation through trial and suffering that was analogous to the trials of

¹⁰⁰ Among other examples, Raimondo mentioned his suspicious nature and mistrust in a letter of December 18, 1497. *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Milan*, vol. 1, 1385–1618, ed. Allen B. Hinds (London, 1912), 340. no. 553.

¹⁰¹ Perhaps his bond with the religious explains why a Breton chaplain named John Penet came to England with Henry in 1485 and was granted the privilege of denization in December of that year; *Campbell, Materials*, 1: 204. Many other Breton friars visited the Tudor court over the years, as well. The bishop of Vannes Pierre de Foix, who was the brother of the duchess of Brittany, was a Franciscan, and more than likely, the orientation of the cathedral was Franciscan, also. Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 31.

¹⁰² "Funeral Ceremonies of Queen Elizabeth," *The Antiquarian Repertory* 4 (1809): 655.

¹⁰³ Goodman, "Henry VII and Christian Renewal," 121–22; Glanmor Williams, "Henry Tudor: *Mab Darogan*," *The Carmarthenshire Antiquary* 21 (1985): 3–4; Michael Bennett, *The Battle of Bosworth* (Gloucester, 1985), 85.

¹⁰⁴ Between 1483 and 1485, approximately thirty-five Welsh bards wrote works that favored the Tudors. Williams, "Henry Tudor," 4.

Christ, especially if he were guided by the Observants, for whom the *imitatio christi* and *via crucis* were so important.¹⁰⁵

Furthermore, it was during the octave of the Assumption of the Virgin from 15 August to 22 August in 1485 that the fortunes of Henry Tudor turned so dramatically after fourteen years of exile in Brittany.¹⁰⁶ It was within that eight-day period that vital supporters joined his forces as he made his way across Wales, entered England near Shrewsbury, and advanced southeastward to his victory at Bosworth Field. More significantly still, it was on the final day of the octave, that of the Coronation of the Virgin, that Henry VII won his crown. However fortuitous it might be judged today, surely then the coincidence of the divine and royal coronations would have been interpreted as a sign of divine sanction. Moreover, the victory would have been attributed to the intercession of the Virgin. Following the tradition of medieval devotional practice and influenced by Franciscan teachings, no doubt Henry VII would have considered himself to have been under the special protection of the Virgin during his perilous journey, for he regarded her as the “surest refuge of all nedefull.” It was to her, he stated in his will, that “in al my necessities I have made my continuel refuge, and by whom I have hiderto in all myne adversities, ever had my spⁱal comforte and

¹⁰⁵ Significantly, contemporaries of Henry VII regarded his life as a difficult one. In a letter to Innocent VIII, written in January 1489, the papal collector Giovanni Gigli referred to Henry Tudor's exile as “the time of his misfortunes.” In 1498, the Spanish ambassador Pedro de Ayala described the king as looking “old for his years but young for the sorrowful life he has led,” a description that preceded the further misfortunes of the premature deaths of his eldest son and queen. The fact that Henry VII had been preserved from such dangers by the hand of God was expressed by John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, in his oration before the king in Cambridge in 1506 and by Queen Elizabeth at the death of Prince Arthur. *Calendar of State Papers, and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy*, vol. 1, 1202–1509, ed. Rawdon Brown (London, 1864), 177, no. 550; *Calendar of Letters, Dispatches, and State Papers, Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain, Preserved in the Archives at Simancas and Elsewhere*, vol. 1, *Henry VII, 1485–1509*, ed. G. A. Bergenroth (London, 1862; repr., Nendeln, 1969), 178, no. 210; Edward Surtz, *The Work and Days of John Fisher: An Introduction to the Position of St. John Fisher (1469–1535), Bishop of Richester, in the English Renaissance and the Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 237; BL Add. MS 45131, p. 80.

¹⁰⁶ For a discussion of the significance of the Assumption for Henry VII and his devotion to the Virgin, see Virginia K. Henderson, “Retrieving the ‘Crown in the Hawthorn Bush’: The Origins of the Badges of Henry VII” in *Tradition and Transformations in Late Medieval England*, ed. Douglas Biggs, Sharon D. Michalove, and A. Compton Reeves (Leiden, 2002), pp. 237–59.

relief.”¹⁰⁷ Indeed, given the whole range of improbable circumstances that surrounded his rise to power, it is not surprising that Henry VII declared his victory to have come about by “the right judgment of God,” however conventional that phrase might have been for others.¹⁰⁸

Indeed, an awareness of the significance of the Feast of the Assumption to Henry VII by the planners of his reception in York in the spring of 1486 might explain the repositioning of the Assumption from the last to the second pageant there that has puzzled some historians.¹⁰⁹ By placing the pageant so soon after the king’s passage through the city gates rather than in front of the Minster where it traditionally occurred, they probably hoped to flatter and delight the new king immediately in order to avert any ill will he might have harbored against the Yorkist-leaning town. The significance of the Feast of the Assumption for Henry VII would explain as well, the dominance and splendor of the Coronation of the Virgin in the Magnificat window of Great Malvern, *circa* 1501 or early 1502, which appears to have been commissioned by three of Henry VII’s closest councillors.¹¹⁰ Whether it originated in Brittany or not, surely the king’s devotion to the Virgin would have been nurtured there, where the Franciscans in particular promoted her cult. In fact, the only records of the actual activities of Henry VII in Vannes to have survived are documents that record three offerings he made at high mass in the cathedral there, all of which occurred on feast days of the Virgin in 1483 and 1484.¹¹¹ The depth of his devotion to the

¹⁰⁷ Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 2.

¹⁰⁸ *Rotuli Parliamentorum* (London, 1832), vi. 268b: “Subsequenterque, idem Dominus Rex, praefatis Comunibus ore suo proprio eloquens, ostendendo suum adventum as Jus et Coronam Angliae fore tam per justum Titulum hereditancie, quam *per verum Deu judicum* in tribuendo sibi Victoriam de inimico suo in Campo.” Cited in Sydney Anglo, *Spectacle, Pageantry, and Tudor Policy* (Oxford, 1969), 18. Italics added.

¹⁰⁹ BL Cotton MS Julius B. xii, 11v; John C. Meagher, “The First Progress of Henry VII,” *Renaissance Drama* 1 (1968): 57–59; *York Civic Records*, ed. Angelo Raines, The Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, vol. 98 (Wakefield, England, 1939), 1: 158.

¹¹⁰ The window includes images of Henry VII, Elizabeth of York, Prince Arthur, Sir Reginald Bray, Sir Thomas Lovell, and Thomas Savage. See Gordon McNeil Rushforth, *Medieval Christian Imagery as Illustrated by the Painted Windows of Great Malvern Priory Church, Worcestershire* (Oxford, 1936).

¹¹¹ Henry Tudor made offerings at High Mass at the Cathedral of Vannes on the feast of the Purification in 1483 and on the feasts of the Assumption and the Nativity of the Virgin in 1484. Although historians have used these documents to

Virgin though, is signaled especially by the fact that he undertook to build not just one, but two chapels dedicated to her, first the Lady Chapel at Windsor and then the chapel at Westminster. It is indicated further by the countless offerings he made at numerous lady altars throughout his reign, by the dedication of twenty-five hundred masses to her following his death, as well as the daily masses of his chantry, and by statements made in his indentures and will.

Goodman argued that Henry VII sought to renew the religious authority of kingship, but his interpretation was essentially a political one, in which he construed the sacred as simply a tool for secular authority.¹¹² It was the sacred nature of kingship though, to which Henry VII was drawn rather than just the “religious authority” he might convey by “burnishing” his Christian image.¹¹³ His belief in the sacred nature of kingship, for example, is particularly apparent in the sequence of thoughts and the precise wording that he used to justify a grant of special privilege to Westminster Abbey in December 1497, following the capture of Perkin Warbeck and the quieting of Cornwall. Though seemingly innocuous on its surface, the document granted the abbey perpetual exemption and special protection to assure that divine services be maintained there always, because it was the repository of the holy unction and the royal regalia “appertaining unto our ‘trone’ and royal coronation and kingly see.”¹¹⁴ The reference to the “kingly see” is an unusual but particularly telling choice of words: in the appropriation of episcopal terminology to describe kingship, the phrase melds priestly office and divine ordination with the dignity royal. Indeed, it was the fact that English kings were crowned at the abbey and that the two most important relics relative to the conveyance of kingship were kept there that made Westminster exceptional. As a sign of divine

establish his presence and freedom in Vannes, the significance of their dates has not been noted. The first of the entries, according to J. Allanic, was made on “le second du dit moys,” that is, the 2 February 1483; elsewhere it has been dated to 8 February, which more than likely was the date that the entry was entered in the account books of the cathedral. Allanic, *Le prisonnier de la tour d’Elven*, 38; Ralph A. Griffiths and Roger S. Thomas, *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty* (New York, 1985), 105.

¹¹² Goodman, “Henry VII and Christian Renewal,” 122, 124–25.

¹¹³ Goodman, “Henry VII and Christian Renewal,” 122.

¹¹⁴ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry VII*, vol. 2, A.D. 1494–1509 (London, 1916), 129–30; hereafter *Calendar of the Patent Rolls, 1494–1509*.

approval, the anointing with the holy unction conferred divine grace upon the king, according to medieval theory, and marked the moment when he assumed a quasi divine status, that of *deus in terris*.¹¹⁵ The great significance that Henry VII appears to have attached to the act of anointing is corroborated by a comment of the Milanese ambassador. Rumor held, so he wrote exactly three months before the king's grant to Westminster, that "out of respect for the sacred unction," Henry VII wanted to make a priest of the earlier pretender Lambert Simnel, who had been crowned in Dublin.¹¹⁶ The indentures for his chantry chapel make it clear that Henry VII held priests in high esteem also, for they too were anointed.¹¹⁷

Whether he viewed his divinely elected status as a weighty burden or special privilege, Henry VII was not alone in perceiving his kingship as providentially guided. Following his victory at Blackheath earlier that year, apparently some of the king's subjects were reminded of his divine status as well, quite apart from any royal effort to suggest it. While the pope censured the rebels, so the Milanese ambassador related in a letter to his duke in September 1497, God punished the Cornishmen, "for all who eat grain garnered since the rebellion, or drink beer brewed with this year's crop, die as if they had taken poison, and hence it is publicly reported that the king is under the

¹¹⁵ John H. Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996), 19. As evidence of the contemporary thinking in this regard, Bishop Russell, chancellor of Oxford University, drafted a sermon in 1483 for the first parliament of Edward V in which he described the king as "quasi deus in terris." Leopold G. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster, 1901), xxxiv; S. B. Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1936; repr. Ann Arbor, 1962), 173; Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957), 89.

¹¹⁶ Although perhaps a mechanism by which to avert any further problems from the imposter, as historians have suggested, the idea also represents the only other role conceivably appropriate for an anointed person. Under the circumstances, Henry VII may have sincerely thought it inappropriate to leave Lambert in the role of a scullery boy. As Anthony Goodman noted, "it reveals the king displaying extreme sensitivity about the indelible mark of royal ordination," although he also suggested that Henry VII's motive may have been political. *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Milan*, vol. 1, 1385–1618, ed. Allen B. Hinds (London, 1912), 325–26, no. 541; Goodman, "Henry VII and Christian Renewal," 116.

¹¹⁷ PRO33/1, third indenture, m. 6; PRO C54/365, m. 7–8; WAM 6637, 1v–2; *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1500–1509*, 142. Only ordained priests could consecrate the host, which alone might explain the esteem in which Henry VII held them. According to the *Imitatio Christi*, when they did so, they acted in the stead of Christ in offering prayers to God; Thomas a Kempis, *A full deuoute & gostely treatyse*, 268.

protection of God eternal.”¹¹⁸ What was seen then as God’s punishment for their opposition to their divinely appointed king must have been a blight of ergotism, which results from grains infected with the highly toxic ergot fungus. Clearly though, the concept of the divine nature of kingship was constructed in medieval times as much by the perceptions and expectations of the people as it was by the court.

Indeed, it was his debt to divine grace that Henry VII sought to acknowledge in the silver-gilt statue of himself that he bequeathed to the shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. The nearly life-size effigy of the king clothed in armor was to represent him kneeling and holding his crown. Far from the “audacious” and deliberately propagandistic image of him receiving his crown that Goodman and many others have claimed, the statue was intended to portray Henry VII *returning* his crown.¹¹⁹ It was to represent, according to his will, “the Crowne which it pleased God to give us, with the victorie of our Ennemye at our furst felde; the which Ymage and Crowne, *we give and bequethe* to Almighty God, our blessed Lady Saint Mary, and Saint Edward King and Confessour.”¹²⁰ The gesture of the statue, in fact, signified the relinquishing of Henry VII’s crown, the very symbol of his earthly identity, so that, by stripping himself of his earthly possessions and humbling himself before God as urged by St. Francis and the Observants, he could attain union with God and life eternal.

Given all the evidence then, it seems upon careful examination that the devotional habits of Henry VII were driven by more profound motivation than just the “shewd awareness of the political value of projecting a public image of regal piety” that has been attributed to him.¹²¹ Indeed, whatever shortcomings he may have had, an indifference to religious matters was not one of them. Clearly, his devotional practices and dedication to St. Francis and the Observants were nurtured in Brittany and brought with him to England, where they remained a powerful force in the life and person of the king.

¹¹⁸ *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, 261, no. 751.

¹¹⁹ Goodman, “Henry VII and Christian Renewal,” 122; Philip G. Lindley, *Gothic to Renaissance: Essays on Sculpture in England* (Stamford, England, 1995), 58.

¹²⁰ Astle, *Will of Henry VII*, 35–36. Italics added.

¹²¹ King, *Tudor Royal Iconography*, 19.

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